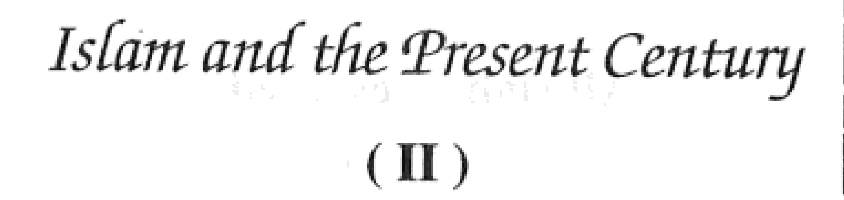


Faith and Life

Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi

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Preface

Islam and the Present Century is the subject of a series that is being published by **Al-Falah** with the aim of releasing humanity from the doldrums into which it has fallen as a result of being overwhelmed by the material life. This series aims at introducing a civilization that is able to bring humanity to the right path and to make it restore its belief in Allah as well as its ethics in order to elevate it again and to give meaning to its life. For sure, it is from this civilization that humanity can derive its religion and science, all at the same time since this civilization can make reconciliation between faith and mind, soul and substance and this worldly life and the Hereafter. Thus, the Islamic civilization connects what is on the earth with what is in the heavens and embraces human interests with Divine ordainments to give credence to man's thought to work receiving guidance from Allah.

This series will be supervised by a number of influential Muslim intellectuals who are known with their

scholar objective view. They form an advisory board to comment, revise and advise. It includes the following names (arranging alphabetically):

Dr. Ahlam Fathi **Dr. Muhammad Abu Laylah**

Dr. Muhammad `Imarah **Dr. Zaghlul El-Naggar**

Here is the second production of our series Islam and the Present Century under the title "Faith and Life" by Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi. The book in hand is an abridged version of *The Impact of Iman in the Life of the Individual* that was published by Al-Falah Foundation in 2002 and translated by Muhammad `Abd al-Fattah. Dr. Ahlam, in editing this book, is just like the one who makes a flower look better in the nosegay than in the meadow where it grew.

Al-Falah Foundation, on its part, would like to express its indebtedness to Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi and Dr. Ahlam Fathi for their great efforts. May Allah bless them for their efforts in the cause of Islam.

Finally all praise and thanks are due to Allah, the Most High.

General director
Sheikh Muhammad `Abdu

Introduction

For many years, Islam has been a target for Western countries that seek to dismantle its principles and to lead its followers astray. The present moment is even more ferocious in targeting and attacking Islam and Muslims as more countries are lured to the arena of the West, that of the U.S.A. in particular. There are many attempts to darken the enlightening image of Islam and to cast a shadow over it with the false image of terrorism, of backwardness, and of ignorance. We constantly find a Muslim presented as a fanatic who believes in superstitions and witchcraft as suggested in a great number of literary works in the West by non-Muslims or by people who pretend to be associated with Islam, as we see for instance in most of the exotic works of the Romantic poets; in Sir Walter Scot's novel, *The Talisman*, and in many modern works, as in Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*. In the latter work, there were intentional attempts to tarnish the whole concept of Islam as a heavenly religion.

Whether these misconceptions are a result of misunderstanding, intentional work on the part of some profiteers or mercenaries, or due to our own passive attitude, we need to correct them for the Western reader. On the other hand, there are those non-Arab Muslims who need be reminded, now and then, of what is truly and what is falsely attributed to Islam. It is the duty of every Muslim, therefore, to redeem Islam's image that the West have attempted to tarnish. Muslims should take positive steps to deliver Islam out of the clutches of barbarism and inhumanity non-Muslims are attributing to it and its followers. Islam is on the defensive now and the best way to defend it is through projecting its concepts and principles in a true and faithful representation.

This does not mean that Islam is in danger; on the contrary, it is expanding in the least expected places and among all the people of the world. Muslims are not to worry about preserving Islam or the Qur'an since Allah has promised to protect and preserve them till the Day of Judgment. Allah says in the Noble Qur'an: ﴿*We have, without doubt, sent down the Message (the Qur'an; Islam); and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)*﴾ (Al-Hijr: 9). In fact, many Western scholars who approached Islam with the intention of showing to the world the fallacy of

Islamic concepts, could not but admit its logical argument, its fairness and truth: Those "*who came to scoff, remained to pray*" (Oliver Goldsmith, *The Deserted Village*). However, Allah urges us to be positive and to do good deeds for our afterlife, i.e. to partly earn our admission into paradise.

Iman[1] does not merely indicate the belief in one God, Allah, and in His Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), but it also necessitates a positive stance towards life, reflected in his attitude towards almost every angle and every situation in his life. *Iman*: the Axis of Life, originally written in Arabic by an eminent Sheikh of Islam and Islamic studies, Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, examines various inter-relationships between faith and other aspects of man's life; faith in God; faith and man's dignity; faith and happiness; faith and love; and hope.

Al-Qaradawi reiterates the Islamic teaching that Man is created merely to worship Allah, as the Qur'an asserts. In the chapter about "*Iman* and Man's Dignity", we learn that Man is dignified in Islam through his mind and his

1. The Arabic word *Iman*, rendered in English as faith, literally means, "To know, to believe, and to be convinced beyond the least shadow of doubt." Faith, thus, is a firm belief rising out of knowledge and conviction. These two synonymous words will be interchangeably used throughout the work.

ability to think, through his superiority over animals, over lust, and over undignified behavior. Man is made of both physical and spiritual matter, but the essence of his being, i.e. the spirit, lasts when his body is no more. Man is considered Allah's vicegerent on earth, made in His image, higher than the angels, which proves the fallacy of Darwin's theory of the origin of species.

Chapter two discusses the correspondence between *Iman* and happiness by posing some rhetorical questions about the nature of happiness. The answer inferred is that it is only through *Iman* or faith in Islam that man can attain everlasting felicity, whereas materialistic pleasure is temporary and deceptive. As an integral part of *Iman*, love is a master key to happiness, therefore, hatred has to be abandoned by good Muslims. Islam urges us to love and be kind to our family, to love our neighbors, to be kind to animals, to turn to peace if our enemies do so, and never to fight unless we are attacked. So, where is violence in Islam?

The last chapter instills a sense of hope in the good believer, for a Muslim should always remain optimistic whatever happens to him or around him. On the other hand, the writer asserts through various examples from the Qur'an and the Prophetic Traditions that despair is a

sign of disbelief or lack of faith. A Muslim should always keep his trust in his Creator.

The book illustrates in simple terms the basic concepts around which a Muslim's life revolves. This book is recommended both for non-Arab Muslims and for those who are interested to know more about Islam.

Ahlam Fathi

Chapter One

Iman (Faith) and the Dignity of Man

- Man in the sight of materialists
- Man in the sight of the believers
- Man's position before Allah
- Man's position in respect to the angels
- Man's position in this material world
- The scholars of Islam extol man's position
- The honor of *Iman* comes after the honor of humanity
- Man between Islam and materialism
- Man's position
- The nature of man
- The goal of man

Iman (Faith) and the Dignity of Man

﴿We have honored the sons of Adam; provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure; and conferred on them special favours, above a great part of Our creation.﴾

(Al-Isra': 70)

Man in the sight of materialists

What is man? According to materialists, he is part of the sand of this earth; he was created from earth, and he walks on it, eats from it, and will be buried in it!

He is a piece of flesh, blood, nerves, systems, glands, and cells; mind and reasoning is only a material excreted by the brain, just as the liver excretes bile or as the kidney excretes urine!

He is a creature of no value or privilege over the other creatures. He is only one of the numerous living beings on this earth; rather, he belongs to the species of pests, insects, reptiles, and apes; he simply "evolved" and became a man!

The earth on which man lives, is only a small planet in the solar system, which is in turn one of hundreds of millions of systems in the unending cosmos.

This is what we have learned through modern astronomy. Copernicus also said that, in terms of place, man is a very tiny object in the spacious cosmos. But, in terms of time, according to Darwin as well as geologists, man is something trivial, for the lifetime of the earth extends to hundreds of millions of years, so what is the value of a hundred, or even hundreds of years that man may live?

This is how materialists view man in terms of time and place. They do not even distinguish him with the names that others name him after, such as "The Divine spirit" or "the speaking soul". He is nothing but a material, animal-like body.

However, what is the value of this body that represents man?

"Relating the human body to its essential elements, a scientist gave the following results:

If we bring a man weighing a hundred and forty pounds and examine his structure deeply, we will find that his body contains the following ingredients:

- an amount of fat that is enough to make seven pieces of soap,
- an amount of carbon that is enough to make seven pencils,
- an amount of phosphorus that is enough to make the heads of a hundred and twenty matches,
- an amount of magnesium salt that can serve as one dosage of laxative,
- an amount of iron that can be used to make a medium-sized pin,
- an amount of lime that is enough to paint a chicken coop,
- an amount of sulfur that can be used to purify the hide of a dog,
- and an amount of water that is enough to fill a ten-gallon barrel.

These materials can be bought from any market for a sum of money that equals fifty or sixty Egyptian piasters![1]

This is the value of man as observed by materialists!"[2]

He is not distinguished by having a soul or any Divine gift!

A contemporary Arab atheist said, "We are only an outcome of nature, just like insects. We equal nothing more than ourselves, as do insects. We only want to be what we are, just like insects. The difference between us and insects is a difference of excellence, and the difference of excellence between us and the highest kind of animal does not much exceed the difference between the lowest kind of insect and the highest kind of animal. What then will the cosmos, the sun, or the moon lose if we lose ourselves?"

The opinion of Darwin and Freud, as well as of their materialistic contemporaries, is not much better than this viewpoint. According to them, man is similar to insects and apes! They see nothing in him but his structure and

1. This was in the early seventies when this was first published.

2. Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Nazarat Fil-Qur'an.*

outward appearance and know nothing about him but clay and mud molded into shape! Thus, he is a creature that is naturally base and not in any way elevated. In short, he is an "evolved animal" that was evolved from one stage to another until he reached the condition which he is now known by. Accordingly, man is originally nothing but an animal!

In his book *The Origin of Species*, Charles Darwin asserts that all living organisms - plants, birds, and animals (including man) pass through different stages during which they are modified and changed. He emphasized that man had not been the same: "If during the long course of ages and under conditions of life, organic beings vary at all in several parts of their organization and think this cannot be disputed. Then, considering the infinite complexity of the relations of all organic beings to each other and to their conditions of existence, causing an infinite diversity in structure, constitution, and habits, to be advantageous to them, I think it would be a most extraordinary fact if no variation even had occurred useful to each being's own welfare, in the same way as so many variations have occurred useful to them."

According to Darwin, then, man is not distinguished from plants, animals, or insects. His body can take different forms since he is liable to variations.

Is there anything more uninspiring to the human soul than this? This inspiration makes man look at himself as a base creature, an animal, a clot of clay or mud! It makes him hold regression, impurity, and immorality as naturally expected from him; it urges him to indulge in indecency and iniquity; rather it makes purity, decency, striving against one's vain desires, sacrifice, and seeking Allah's Pleasure, strange and unnatural to him!

Man in the sight of the believers

In the sight of the believers, man is a creature who is honored by Allah, Who created him in the best of molds, gave him shape, and made that shape beautiful; He created him with His own Hand, breathed into him of His Spirit, and made His angels prostrate themselves before him; He distinguished him with knowledge and will and made him His vicegerent on earth and the pivot of activity in the universe; He subjected to his use, all things in the heavens and on earth, and made His bounties flow to him in exceeding measure, both seen and unseen. Thus, all things in the universe are made for him and

subjected to his use, but man himself was created by Allah the Almighty for Himself.

Allah, the Most High, says in some Divine *hadiths*,

> *"O son of Adam! I created you for Myself and created all things for you, so, as it is My right over you, do not (let yourself) be distracted by that which I created for you from that which I created you for.*
>
> *O son of Adam! I created you for Myself so do not neglect (your duties towards Me), and guaranteed your provision so that you may not feel tired (seeking it). O son of Adam! Ask for Me and you will find Me, and if you find Me you will have found everything, but if you lose Me you will have lost everything. And I (should) be dearer than everything to you."*

It is true that man is a tiny object in respect to his size and the life of his body, compared to the vastness of the cosmos, but at the same time he is a creature of great value in respect to his soul and spiritual entity. Is man in reality anything other than that soul and that spiritual entity?

It is also a reality that man, with regard to his short lifetime on earth, is - if what they say is correct - an atom

in the desert from the ancient geological times. Nevertheless, believers are certain that death is not the end of man; rather, it is a transitional stop to eternity that has no end, i.e. to the abode of immortality where it is said to believers,

> ﴾*Peace be upon you! Enter ye here, to dwell therein.*﴿
>
> (Az-Zumar: 72)

This is the dignity of man in the scale of religion in general, but he has a very special standing in Islam. The Qur'an speaks about man in hundreds of verses. It is sufficient for us that the first group of verses - which are five in number - that the Archangel Jibril (Gabriel) brought down upon the heart of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), record man's relation with his Lord; the relation of creation and honoring, and the relation of guidance and teaching. These verses cite the word "*Rabb*" (literally meaning "Lord"), which includes the meaning of teaching, caring, promotion, and degrees of perfection. These first revealed verses read,

> ﴾*Proclaim! (or Read!) in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who created -created man, out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood: proclaim! And thy*

Lord is Most Bountiful - He Who taught (the use of) the Pen - taught man that which he knew not. ﴿

(Al-`Alaq: 1-5)

The numerous Qur'anic verses that stress the importance of learning illustrate that one of the reasons of creation is to learn and teach others. Man has learned form his Creator, his First-Teacher, about creation, about life and death, and about the reason for his existence. In fact, the Glorious Qur'an is the Muslim's divine constitution that instructs him with clear rules and sound directions, which he has to learn to adhere to. Even the angles had no knowledge except through Allah. When Adam was created, the Almighty taught him the names of the angles, which they themselves were ignorant of until they were informed.

Man's position before Allah

In many verses in various surahs, the Qur'an shows how man is near to Allah, and how Allah is near to man. It is such nearness that has eliminated the need for mediators and those who seek profit through religion, those who have made of themselves "doormen" at the "gates" of Allah's mercy that embraces all things, but Allah knows that they are liars. He states in the Qur'an,

﴾ *When My servants ask thee concerning Me, I am indeed close (to them): I listen to the prayer of every supplicant when he calleth on Me.* ﴿

(Al-Baqarah: 186)

﴾ *To Allah belong the East and the West: wherever ye turn, there is the presence of Allah.* ﴿

(Al-Baqarah: 115)

﴾ *It was We Who created man, and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him: for We are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein.* ﴿

(Qaf: 16)

﴾ *There is not a secret consultation between three, but He makes the fourth among them, nor between five but He makes the sixth, nor between fewer nor more, but He is in their midst, wheresoever they be.* ﴿

(Al-Mujadalah: 7)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) stressed upon this meaning in the Divine *hadith* inspired to him:

"I am as My servant thinks I am, and I am with him whenever he remembers Me: if he remembers Me in himself, I remember him in Myself; if he remembers Me in a group of people, I remember him in a better

group of people; if he draws near to Me a hand's span, I draw near to him an arm's length, and if he draws near to Me an arm's length, I draw near to him a fathom's length; and if he comes to Me walking, I go to him at speed."[1]

This is man's position in the sight of Allah.

Man's position in respect to the angels

Man's position in the angels, in the heavenly spiritual worlds, is such a position that was not even given to the nearest angels, for it was man for whom Allah chose this position, namely to be Allah's vicegerent on earth. The Qur'an reads,

﴿*Behold, Thy Lord said to the angels: 'I will create a vicegerent on earth.' They said: 'Wilt Thou place therein one who will make mischief therein and shed blood?- whilst we do mention Thy name with praises and worship thee?' He said: 'I know what ye know not.' And He taught Adam the names of all things; then He placed them before the angels, and said: 'Tell Me the names of these if ye are right.' They said: 'Glory to Thee: of knowledge we have none, save what Thou hast taught us: in truth it is Thou Who art perfect in knowledge and wisdom.'*

---

1. Narrated by al-Bukhari.

He said: 'O Adam! Tell them their names.' When he had told them, Allah said: 'Did I not tell you that I know the secrets of heaven and earth, and I know what ye reveal and what ye conceal?' ﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 30-33)

Allah wanted to honor this species and emphasize its position in the spiritual world, so He commanded the angels to greet this new creature, by bowing before him in respect and glorification:

﴿ *Behold, thy Lord said to the angels: 'I am about to create man from clay: when I have fashioned him (in due proportion) and breathed into him of My spirit, fall ye down in obeisance unto him.' So the angels prostrated themselves, all of them together: not so Iblis...* ﴾

(Sad: 71-74)

Iblis protested against the command of His Lord and refused to greet man, motivated by envy and conceit. Thus, he became one of the disbelievers and challenged man, holding him as his enemy. The Qur'an tells us about the result of this obvious enemy, saying that Allah said to him,

﴿ *Then get thee out from here: for thou art rejected, accursed. And My Curse shall be on thee till the Day of Judgment.* ﴾

(Sad: 77-78)

This is man's position in the spiritual world.

Man's position in this material world

Man's position in this material spacious cosmos is as the position of a disposing master to whose use all things in this world have been subjected, as if all things in this cosmos were "woven" for him and "cut out" to suit his "size".

The following Qur'anic verses illustrate this point,

﴿ *It is Allah Who hath created the heavens and the earth and sendeth down rain from the skies, and with it bringeth out fruits wherewith to feed you; it is He Who hath made the ships subject to you, that they may sail through the sea by His command; and the rivers (also) hath He made subject to you. And He hath made subject to you the sun and the moon, both diligently pursuing their courses; and the night and the day hath He (also) made subject to you. And He giveth you of all that ye ask for. But if*

ye count the favours of Allah, never will ye be able to number them. ﴿

(Ibrahim: 32-34)

﴾ *We have honored the sons of Adam; provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure; and conferred on them special favours, above a great part of Our creation.* ﴿

(Al-Isra': 70)

﴾ *It is Allah Who has subjected the sea to you, that ships may sail through it by His command, that ye may seek of His Bounty, and that ye may be grateful. And He has subjected to you, as from Him, all that is in the heavens and on earth: behold, in that are Signs indeed for those who reflect.* ﴿

(Al-Jathiyah: 12-13)

﴾ *Do ye not see that Allah has subjected to your (use) all things in the heavens and on earth, and has made His bounties flow to you in exceeding measure, (both) seen and unseen?* ﴿

(Luqman: 20)

This is man's position in this universe and his relation with the things therein.

But why was man given this supreme position, although the universe contains many things which are bigger and larger than him?

It is the secret of the light which is derived from Allah's Light, and the breath which is from Allah's spirit. It is the breath that prepared him for the vicegerency on earth, and for undertaking the greater trust of responsibility, which the Qur'an describes in an excellent literary way, saying,

> ﴾*We did indeed offer the Trust to the Heavens and the Earth and the Mountains; but they refused to undertake it, being afraid thereof: but man undertook it...*﴿
>
> (Al-Ahzab: 72)

It is by virtue of this readiness that man is given choice concerning his destiny, because Allah has facilitated for him all means of guidance and removed all excuses:

> ﴾*Nay, man will be evidence against himself.*﴿
>
> (Al-Qiyamah: 14)

> ﴾*Let him who will, believe, and let him who will, reject (it).*﴿
>
> (Al-Kahf: 29)

﴾*Truly he succeeds that purifies it, and he fails that corrupts it!*﴿

(Ash-Shams: 9-10)

﴾*If ye did well, ye did well for yourself; if ye did evil, (ye did it) against yourself.*﴿

(Al-Isra': 7)

Islam has elevated man and takes into consideration everything that belongs to him: his soul and body, his mind and heart, his will and conscience, his instincts and desires. It has never imposed any difficulties on him (in religion), nor has it ever prohibited anything good and beneficial for him. It has never closed a gate to goodness before him, nor has it ever left him alone to be cheated by those who trade with religion. On the contrary, the Qur'an in a straightforward manner addresses him:

﴾*O man! What has seduced thee from thy Lord Most Beneficent? Him Who created thee, fashioned thee in due proportion, and gave thee a just bias; In whatever form He wills, does He put thee together.*﴿

(Al-Infitar: 6-8)

﴾*O thou man! Verily thou art ever toiling on towards thy Lord painfully toiling, but thou shalt meet Him.*﴿

(Al-Inshiqaq: 6)

The scholars of Islam extol man's position

This is a concise but elaborated picture of man's position as presented in the Qur'an. All the prominent Muslim scholars and scientists in different fields and specializations have extolled this human position.

Abu Bakr ibn al-`Arabi, a scholar of *Fiqh*, said, "Allah the Almighty has never created a better creature than man, for He created him as living, knowledgeable, mighty, able to speak, able to see, able to dispose of his affairs, wise - and these are the attributes of the Lord (Glorified and Exalted be He)."

In his *Ihya' `Ulum Ad-Din*, Imam al-Ghazali explained the reasons why Allah's servants love Him. He mentioned that among these reasons is the harmony between the entity of man and the entity of Allah (Glory be to Him). It is a hidden harmony that does not relate to resemblance in picture or form, but to hidden meanings, some of which can be mentioned in books and some cannot. He said,

"What can be mentioned is the servant's nearness to his Lord (Glory be to Him) as regards the attributes that Allah has commanded him to imitate and follow, that is, to adopt the morals of Lordship. Thus it was said, 'Adopt

Allah's morals,' and that is by acquiring the good attributes which are originally derived from the Divine Attributes, including the attributes pertaining to knowledge, beneficence, benevolence, kindness, bountifulness, mercy, and guidance, in addition to any other noble trait of the *Shari`ah*. All these draw man near to Allah (Glorified be He)."

"On the other hand, it is not permissible to write down in books what is denoted by the Qur'anic statement: ﴿*They ask thee concerning the spirit (of inspiration). Say: 'The spirit (cometh) by command of my Lord*﴾ (Al-Isra': 85). Here the Qur'an indicates that this is a Divine command that is beyond the understanding of human beings. This is even more obvious in the Qur'anic statement: ﴿*When I have fashioned him (in due proportion) and breathed into him of My spirit, fall ye down in obeisance unto him.*﴾ (Sad: 72) That was why He made His angels fall down in obedience unto him. This is again implied in the Qur'an, ﴿*We did indeed make thee a vicegerent on earth*﴾ (Sad: 26), as Adam deserved to be Allah's vicegerent only by virtue of this harmony. This is further referred to in the Prophetic *hadith*, 'Surely Allah created Adam in His own image.'[1] Those who lack sound understanding think that this image refers to an apparent, concrete image, so they

1. Narrated by Muslim.

adopt theories of assimilation, embodying, and resemblance (as regards Allah and man)! There is no doubt that Allah, the Lord of the worlds, is far beyond what such ignorant people allege. It is also referred to in Allah's saying to Prophet Musa (peace be upon him), 'I was ill and you did not visit me!' He said, 'O my Lord! How was that?' Allah said, 'My servant, so and so, fell ill and you did not visit him. Had you visited him, you would surely have found Me with him!'

This harmony only appears through persistent performance of voluntary acts of worship, of course, as well as perfect performance of religious obligations. Allah, the Almighty, says in a Divine *hadith*,

> *'My servant continues to draw near to Me with voluntary acts (of worship) so that I shall love him. When I love him I am his hearing with which he hears, his sight with which he sees, his tongue with which he speaks'*[1]"[2]

Imam ibn al-Qayyim said, "Allah (Glory be to Him) favored man with special gifts among His creatures. He honored, preferred, and dignified him; created him for

1. Narrated by al-Bukhari.
2. Al-Ghazali, *Ihya' `Ulum Ad-Din*.

Himself and created all things for him; gave him out of His knowledge, love, nearness, honoring, that which He did not give to anyone else; subjected all things in the heavens, on earth, and what is between them to his use; used even His angels, who are near to Him, for his benefit, and made them his protectors during his sleep, awakening, travels, staying at home, etc.; sent down His Books to him; sent him Messengers also from among men; and addressed him directly. Thus, man has a special position that none of the other creatures has."[1]

The honor of *Iman* comes after the honor of humanity

These are the meanings of dignity and honor that the Islamic creed inculcates in the heart of the believer from the viewpoint of his being a "man". Yet in respect of his being a "believer", he feels deeper meanings, more supreme honor, and his *Iman* elevates him to a very high position that can never be reached by any normal means!

In the capacity of his being a member in this nation of *Iman*, he feels greater dignity and even more honor:

1. Ibn al-Qayyim, *Madarij as-Salikin*.

﴾*Ye are the best of Peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah.*﴿

(Al `Imran: 110)

﴾*Thus have We made of you an Ummah justly balanced, that ye might be witnesses over the nations.*﴿

(Al-Baqarah: 143)

﴾*He has chosen you, and has imposed no difficulties on you in religion.*﴿

(Al-Hajj: 78)

The believer feels the honor that Allah has recorded in His Book for believers along with the attribution of honor to Himself and His Messenger:

﴾*But honor belongs to Allah and His Messenger, and to the believers.*﴿

(Al-Munafiqun: 8)

He feels that he has been granted dignity and freedom with which he rises to where no one can transcend him and where he can master and be mastered by none:

﴾*And never will Allah grant to the unbelievers a way (to triumph) over the believers.*﴿

(An-Nisa': 141)

He feels that he is protected by Allah, the Beneficent the Merciful, through His help, support, care, and guidance:

﴾*That is because Allah is the Protector of those who believe, but those who reject Allah have no protector.*﴿

(Muhammad: 11)

﴾*Allah is the Protector of those who have Faith: from the depths of darkness He will lead them forth into light. Of those who reject Faith the patrons are the evil ones: from light they will lead them forth into the depths of darkness...*﴿

(Al-Baqarah: 257)

The believer feels that Allah is always with him, watching, protecting, and helping:

﴾*...and it was due from Us to aid those who believed.*﴿

(Ar-Rum: 47)

﴾*In the end We deliver our Messengers and those who believe: thus is it fitting on Our part that We should deliver those who believe!*﴿

(Yunus: 103)

He feels that he is protected by Allah, the Ever-Strong the Almighty, Who defends him against the evil intentions of conspirators and aggressors:

> ﴾*Verily Allah will defend (from ill) those who believe: verily, Allah loveth not any that is a traitor to Faith, or shows ingratitude.*﴿
>
> (Al-Hajj: 38)

The Qur'an takes believers as a criterion of righteousness or unrighteousness of deeds, as their judgments are considered by Allah, and their views regarding deeds are linked with their view of Allah and His Messenger:

> ﴾*And say: 'Work (righteousness): soon will Allah observe your work, and His Messenger, and the believers.'*﴿
>
> (At-Tawbah: 105)

This verse denotes that the believers' pleasure is derived from Allah's Pleasure. By the same token, the Qur'anic statement ﴾*Grievous and odious (is such conduct) in the sight of Allah and of the believers*﴿ (Ghafir: 35) denotes that when they hold something as grievous and odious, it means that Allah holds it as such.

These great meanings and supreme feelings, once inculcated in the entity of an individual, make him an honorable, glorified, high-spirited, and optimistic man who never humiliates himself before anyone or surrenders to a tyrant, a transgressor, or to wealth or high status; and his motto becomes "I am a master in this universe and a servant of Allah alone".

Being aware of this, one is not astonished to know that a black slave like Bilal ibn Rabah, being deeply devoted to Islam, prided himself above the arrogant "masters", and raised his head high. This is because he, by virtue of his belief, had become superior to them in the sight of Allah. He would look at Umayyah ibn Khalaf, Abu Jahl ibn Hisham, and other leaders of the Quraysh and noblemen of Makkah, in view of his being one endowed with eyesight looking at blind people, and one who is walking in the light at people who are groping in darkness. Allah the Almighty says,

> ﴿*Can he who was dead, to whom We gave life, and a light whereby he can walk amongst men, be like him who is in the depths of darkness, from which he can never come out?*﴾
>
> (Al-An`am: 122)

﴾*Is then one who walks headlong, with his face grovelling, better guided, or one who walks evenly on a Straight Way?*﴿

(Al-Mulk: 22)

Likewise, it is not strange to know that an illiterate Bedouin, from the people of the desert, like Rib`i ibn `Amir, after having been enlightened by the Islamic creed and the verses of the Qur'an, stood before Rustum, the general of the Persian forces, paying no attention to his power or attendants, or the gold and silver glittering around him. When Rustum asked him, "Who are you?", he answered him with honor supported by faith, as recorded by history, saying, "We are people sent by Allah to lead people away from the worship of creatures, to the worship of the Lord of creatures, alone; from the life of hardship to another life of ease; and from the injustice of doctrines to the justice of Islam".

Man between Islam and materialism

Man's belief in the Divine honor that Allah has bestowed on him, his standing in the heavens, and his leading position in this universe, makes him feel how valuable his identity is which derives its honor from his special connection to Allah as well as his connection to

all things in the cosmos. Thus, he is armed with a sense of honor and self-respect in the face of iniquity and humiliation, and never feels trivial or lost. This feeling, with which the believer lives, is a great gain in the world of consciousness and perception as well as in the world of reality and conduct.

Away from religion, many people in the west as well as in non-Muslim communities seek their own carnal enjoyment. Hedonists, or those who seek their pleasure, believe that the true art of life is to cram as much enjoyment as possible into each moment of their existence. Moreover, they do not care about others. They only eat, drink, and have free love relations. They consider their actions part of their freedom and since life is short and they do not believe in the afterlife, they buy their best to make the most of their time. As a result, social conventions are frowned at and looked down upon, moral behavior is abandoned and replaced by what is new and fashionable.

There is a big difference between the following two men: one who lives with the belief that he is just an "animal" from a high species that has no roots before his existence nor extension after his death. He also believes

that his connection to the spacious existence does not excel the apes' connection to it. The other man, however, lives with the belief that he is a vicegerent of Allah on earth, who is assigned by Him to establish the truth, serve as a means to goodness, and spread beauty in this universe. He feels that the whole universe is subjected to his use, that the honorable angels protect him, that the Lord of all is with him, that he is one of those on whom Allah has bestowed His Grace, of the Prophets, the sincere, the martyrs, and the righteous, and that his existence does not end with death, for he was created for a life of eternity.

This well-established and certain feeling of man's standing in this universe, is one of the essential points in which the Islamic creed contradicts the materialistic ideology, which is spreading throughout Western civilization today, concerning the issue of what man is.

The contradiction between the two views is represented in three essential matters:

1. Man's position in this universe.
2. His instinctive nature which Allah created in him.
3. His goal and role in this life.

Man's position

The Islamic creed has defined man's position in this universe since Allah the Almighty said to the angels, *"I will create a vicegerent on earth"*, as mentioned before. He is a creature with a special position among the other creatures; he is not an inanimate object, a plant, an animal, an angel, or a devil, but a unique, honored, and responsible creature that does not stand alone in this world as some atheists claim. Rather, he stands by the will of the Lord Who created him and gave him various abilities; the God Who created him in the best of molds, taught him speech, and granted him the faculties of hearing and seeing, heart, and intellect. Man is not a slave nor is he subjected to anything in this universe, except his being a servant of Allah alone.

This is man's position according to Islam, but from the materialistic perspective he is not an honored creature that was brought to existence by a Great Creator, but a "wild" plant that emerges from nonexistence to existence by itself, lives by itself, dies by itself, and whose story is ended by death. In short, man is considered an animal that may be described as an "elevated animal" or a "social animal" or an "evolved animal", but after all he is an

"animal". However, through experimental science, he managed to "overcome" nature and control materials, and also with this science he has become this evolved animal that looks at himself as a god who can do anything he wants on earth, thinking that he is completely controlling it.

This materialistic view concerning man has produced two different feelings:

1. Man's feeling of triviality and loss and his looking at himself in a purely animalistic perspective.
2. The feeling of self-conceit and pride, which leads man to consider himself a god when he discards the existence of the True God and acts as a god who is not to be asked about his deeds, as was claimed by Julian Hiksli[1] when he described man in the modern time as Allah who can create things and has a free will!

When man started to awaken from the inebriety of conceit through scientific progress, industrial revolution, and financial flourishing, he started to feel a psychological crisis in respect of his being a distinguished man. This

1. See the translation of his book by Hasan Khattab under the title *Al-Insan Fi Al-`Alam Al-Hadith*.

can be observed in the writings of critics among them, such as Alexis Carl in his book *Man: The Unknown Creature*, Spengler in his book *Collapse of the Western Civilization*, in addition to Toynbee, Renè Genoa, Koln Wilson, and others.

The nature of man

Man's nature is one of the most dangerous areas that one may ever approach, as people inevitably go astray when dealing with this issue. This relates to the duality and complexity of his instinctive nature which Allah created in him; he is neither a pure lust nor a pure mind, nor is he a pure body or a pure soul, as his constitution contains both aspects.

Professor Seshot, an American scientist working as a professor at Yale University, said in his book *Life of the Soul*, "The strange dual nature of man is a matter that has confused scientists for a long time. This is because the physical aspect in man - i.e., his body - lives, grows, and then dies, yet still there is something that is not perceived by the senses and that seems to control this body. This thing can feel and think. It is that side that contains the essence of his entity".

Man seems to be two beings: one is material and the other is immaterial, but one wonders: is each of them real, or is one of them only an illusion?

Error and deviation which appear when anyone tries to understand the nature of man and conceive his reality, always comes as a result of neglecting either of these two elements in his entity, or as a result of disconnecting them and considering that each of them is separated from the other."

Islam has defined the nature of man in the best and most perfect way, because Islam is the word of Allah and man is His creation, and a creator of something is the best one to know about its nature: The Glorious Qur'an asserts this idea:

> ﴾*Should He not know, He that created? And He is the One that understands the finest mysteries (and) is well acquainted (with them).*﴿
>
> (Al-Mulk: 14)

Allah created man as a physical body and a transparent soul; a body that attracts him to the earth and a soul that looks forward to the heavens; a body that has instincts and lusts and a soul that has hopes and expectations; a body that has desires which resemble

those of an animal and a soul that has longings like those of the angels.

This dual nature is not an accidental or secondary matter in man, but is the nature with which Allah created him and qualified him to be His vicegerent on earth. When the Almighty created Adam, He gathered both the handful of clay and the breath from His spirit:

> ﴿*Such is He, the Knower of all things, hidden and open, the Exalted (in power), the Merciful; He Who has made everything which He has created most Good: He began the creation of man with (nothing more than) clay, and made his progeny from a quintessence of the nature of a fluid despised: but He fashioned him in due proportion, and breathed into him something of His spirit. And He gave you (the faculties of) hearing and sight and feeling (and understanding): little thanks do ye give.*﴾
>
> (As-Sajdah: 6-9)

The creed of Islam has not neglected the spirit for the sake of the clay, nor has it neglected the clay for the sake of the spirit; but rather it combines between both of them in a harmonious, congruous unity, giving each its own right without exaggeration or negligence.

History has witnessed religions and doctrines that built their philosophies on the non-consideration of the physical, corporal side of man, along with the application of torment to it, so as to facilitate his spiritual growth to gain purity and strength, such as the Brahmins of India and the Christians who believe in celibacy.

Opposite to this trend is materialism that denies the existence of the soul in man and of the God of the universe, as it only believes in material, tangible things that can be perceived by the senses and controlled by experimentation. Man, according to this trend, lives as half a man, or even lower, as he lives only for the animalistic part within him.

Islam holds a middle ground, which is characterized by moderation, and does not advocate extremism. It urges its adherents to perform the spiritual rites decreed by the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and at the same time, it allows people to satisfy their earthly needs. The Prophet himself (peace be upon him) used to fast some days and break his fast other days, to perform prayers at night and also to sleep part of the night. He was married and had children. According to al-Bukhari, `Abdullah ibn `Amr narrated the following *hadith,* "Allah's Messenger was informed

that I had taken an oath to fast daily and to pray (every night) all the night throughout my life, so Allah's Messenger came to me and asked me whether it was true. I replied, 'Yes, I said so.' The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, '*Do not do that; fast for same days and break the fast for a few days, pray and sleep. Fast three days a month as the reward of good deeds is multiplied ten times and that will be equal to one year of fasting.*' I replied, 'I can do better than that.' The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to me, '*Fast one day and leave it the other day, and that is the fasting of the Prophet David, which is the best fasting.*' I said, 'I have the capacity to fast better (more) than that.' The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, '*There is no better fasting than that.*'"

`A'ishah also narrated, "A woman from the tribe of Banu Asad was sitting with me when Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) came to my house and said, '*Who is this?*' I said, 'She is such and such a person. She does not sleep at night because she is engaged in prayer.' The Prophet (peace be upon him) said disapprovingly, '*Do (good) deeds which are within your capacity as Allah never gets tired of giving rewards till you get tired of doing good deeds.*'"

On another occasion, the Prophet (peace be upon him) advised a Muslim to act towards life as if he were living forever, and to work for the Hereafter as if he were dying the following day.

The goal of man

Man's goal and mission in life has been clearly depicted in Islam. Man was neither created in jest, nor was he left without purpose, yet he was created for a goal and wisdom and not just for himself. He was not created to be a slave of one of the elements of the universe, nor was he created to enjoy life as animals do, nor was he created to spend his lifetime, whether long or short, and then be buried underground, eaten by worms, and be ended forever.

Man was created to know Allah, worship Him, and be His vicegerent on earth. He was created to undertake the greater trust in this short life: the trust of duties and responsibilities, so that he may go through trials and obligations and thus be prepared for another life of eternity.

It is truly great that man was not created for himself but to worship Allah. It is also great that he was not created for this perishable, mortal life, but for immortality!

They said that fools live to eat and intellects eat to live. This statement does not provide any solution, for "living" itself is not a goal, and thus the question why man lives remains.

While materialists say that man lives for himself and for worldly pleasures, believers say that he lives for his Lord, the Most High, and for the next, everlasting life:

> ﴾*Did ye then think that We had created you in jest, and that ye would not be brought back to Us (for account)? Therefore exalted be Allah, the King, the Reality.*﴿
>
> (Al-Mu'minun: 115-116)

There is a huge difference between one who lives for himself and one who lives for his Lord; between one who lives for worldly pleasures and one who lives for an existence which is not limited by time or place!

According to the materialistic, atheistic view, man has no goal, for a goal requires a purpose and this view denies that man was created for any purpose. So man has no mission in life except the mission of seeking livelihood and its embellishments, or in other words, seeking the adornments and enjoyment of this worldly life! Nothing more! Then when man's short lifetime

ends, everything in his existence perishes with it. Allah says:

> ﴾*Say: "Short is the enjoyment of this world...*﴿
>
> (An-Nisa': 77)

This enjoyment is not only short but also valueless and trivial, for it is purely animalistic. Once a man of letters mocked at the seekers of this enjoyment, saying, "Whoever's goal is to satisfy his stomach and genitals, he equals nothing more than what goes out of them".

How sufficient for us are the Qur'anic words:

> ﴾*those who reject Allah will enjoy (this world) and eat as cattle eat; and the Fire will be their abode.*﴿
>
> (Muhammad: 12)

Man, according to materialists, does nothing but satisfy his desires and lusts, that is to say the demands of his animalistic side, which thus grows and swells at the cost of the other sides which consequently languish or waste away. This fast growth of the animalistic side of man is like a tumor that finally leads to man's entire destruction.

Man should have a goal other than his own self and its vain desires, otherwise he will continue to go around

in a vicious cycle. He may also become as a Western writer said when describing the "existentialists" whose philosophy deals with the issue of man's establishment of his identity and existence alone. He said, "The likeness of the existentialist is as the likeness of a dog that keeps running around himself to reach his tail but neither reaches it nor stops running. This is a game that dogs play when they have nothing to do, so they seek to have fun through things that do not lead to any result."

This comparison reminds us of the parable that the Qur'an presents for whoever abandons the verses of Allah, clings to the earth, and follows his own vain desires. Allah the Almighty says,

> ﴿*And recite (O Muhammad) to them the story of him to whom We gave Our Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), but he threw them away, so Shaytan (Satan) followed him up, and he became of those who went astray. And had We willed, We would surely have elevated him therewith but he clung to the earth and followed his own vain desire. So his description is the description of a dog: if you drive him away, he lolls his tongue out, or if you leave him alone, he (still) lolls his tongue out. Such is the description of the*

people who reject Our Ayat. So relate the stories, perhaps they may reflect. Evil is the likeness of the people who reject Our Ayat, and used to wrong their own selves. ﴾

(Al-A`raf: 175-177)

Chapter Two

Iman and Happiness

- Where is happiness?
- Is happiness found in material pleasure?
- Is happiness found in having sons?
- Is happiness found in experimental science?
- Is happiness found within man?
- To what extent material things contribute to achieving happiness?

Iman and Happiness

Happiness is the paradise of dreams that mankind seek, including philosophers with their meditation and abstraction and the common people with their naivety and simplicity; and kings in their towering palaces and the wretched people in their small huts. It is unbelievable that someone could be seeking hardship for himself or that he is pleased with melancholy.

Where is happiness?

This is a question that has always confused people: where is happiness?

Many people sought it where it could never have been, so they returned just like a seeker of pearls in a desert, with nothing, and feeling exhausted, depressed, and disappointed!

As a matter of fact, people in different eras tried all kinds of material pleasure and enjoyment and all forms of

carnal desires, but none of those - alone - brought them true happiness, and perhaps they found a new aspect of grief with every new kind of these pleasures.

Is happiness found in material pleasure?

Some people think so and thus expect to find happiness in wealth and luxury. On the contrary, reality confirms that countries which enjoy a high level of living and prosperous life, still suffer hardship, depression, and misery and are constantly seeking other ways to happiness.

The editor-in-chief of *Rusalusuf Magazine*, which takes an impartial stance towards spiritual meanings and values, published a reportage in the form of two essays a few years ago entitled "The Residents of Paradise are not Happy". The residents of paradise that he was referring to in the title, are the residents of Sweden who enjoy a very high economic level, and who scarcely fear poverty, senility, unemployment, or any calamity or hardship. This is because the government guarantees huge regular aid for every individual who may face any of these calamities, so that he may not suffer from poverty or any economic need.

Sweden assigns a certain amount for every Swedish individual, out of the national income, which equals five-hundred and twenty-one Egyptian pounds every year, that is to say about forty-three pounds every month.

The socialist government of Sweden has nearly managed to remove all differences between classes, by prescribing progressive taxes and creating all kinds of health and social insurance, which do not exist in other countries.

Every Swedish resident has the right to a pension, or support due to illness, incompetence, high cost of living, housing, or blindness, and receives it in cash. He also enjoys free medical treatment in hospitals. Motherhood support is paid for all women. It includes the costs of delivery, medical care in hospitals, as well as an additional support for the newborn.

Insurance against work injuries is obligatory.

The conditions of support concerning unemployment are the best on an international level.

The state gives very high social support for children, including financial support amounting to forty pounds a year until the child attains sixteen years of age, free health support, free transportation expenses for vacations

that the child enjoys until the age of fourteen, and schools with low-cost dues to care children for pre-school age all day.

Education at all stages is free. Along with this, students receive support in the form of clothing and living support for the disabled. Excellent students receive loans that reach to two hundred and fifty pounds.

The state also grants loans to furnish the houses of the newly-weds that reach to three hundred pounds with a small amount of interest that is repaid within five years.

One third of the taxes that the Swedish people pay is spent by the state on social insurance. The state pays eighty percent of these taxes in the form of financial support. The largest budget is that of the ministry of social affairs followed by that of the ministry of education.

Along with these guaranties that cover all aspects of life, the journalist mentioned that the Swedish people suffer from worry, solitude, distress, tension, complaints, dissatisfaction, and despair. As a result, they flee from this life of hardship through suicide to which thousands of people resort, to be rid of the psychological torment from which they are suffering.

The writer of the reportage concluded that the secret behind this hardship relates to one thing: deprivation of faith, i.e. any kind of faith.

The Unites States of America, the richest country in the world, has not realized happiness for its people despite its wealth, its skyscrapers, spacecraft, and abundant income. Even one of its thinkers has stated, "Life in New York is a beautiful cover of a case of distress and hardship!"

This distress was observed by all the intellectuals of the East and the West. From the people of the East, the great martyr Sayyid Qutb recorded this in his book, which has not been published yet *Amrika Allati Ra'ayt* (America That I Saw).

From the people of the West, the French writer Francoise Sagan who visited New York twice, then wrote a book where we read, "New York is burdensome for man. Its heart beats faster than the hearts of its residents. Actually, the crisis that the residents of New York are suffering is a sentimental one. Blood is boiling up in the hearts of the muscles of those exhausted, hasty Americans. They want to economize time without knowing how to spend that time..."

Thus, abundant wealth does not necessarily bring happiness, nor is it the essential element in its achievement. Rather, it often occurs that abundant wealth is a cause of tribulation in this worldly life before the Hereafter. That is why Allah the Almighty says about a group of hypocrites,

> ﴾*Let not their wealth nor their (following in) sons dazzle thee: in reality Allah's plan is to punish them with these things in this life.*﴿
>
> (At-Tawbah: 55)

"Punishment" here refers to hardship, suffering, pain, grief, and illness. This is a worldly punishment which involves suffering like that which is mentioned in the Prophetic *hadith* that reads,

> "*Travelling is a piece of suffering.*"

This is also the suffering that we ourselves witness as inflicted upon those whose intention is only directed towards this worldly life, those who want to gain all knowledge about it, and those whose hopes are connected to it, so their souls always suffer and they are never satisfied.

We read in a *hadith* narrated on the authority of Anas where the Prophet (peace be upon him) gives an accurate description of this psychological suffering,

"Whoever whose intention is (only directed to) the Hereafter, Allah makes his richness in his heart (i.e. grants him contentment), brings his (self) together (i.e. grants him tranquility and peace of mind), and (the good things of) worldly life (that have been predestined for him) come to him (even) unwillingly; and whoever whose intention is (only directed to) worldly life, Allah makes his poverty between his eyes (i.e. inflicts him with dependence on others), disunites his (self) (i.e. inflicts him with confusion and bewilderment), and none of (the good things of) worldly life comes to him except those that Allah has predestined for him."[1]

Among the most strenuous forms of suffering in this worldly life is what Ibn al-Qayyim defined as disuniting one's self and heart and having poverty before one's eyes. Were it not that the lovers of this worldly life were addicted to its love, they would have asked to be rid of this suffering. However, most of them are still complaining about it. Among the forms of suffering is that of the heart and body by shouldering worldly tribulations, fighting against them, and bearing the

1. Narrated by at-Tirmidhi on the authority of Anas ibn Malik. Ibn Majah and others narrated a *hadith* similar to it on the authority of Zayd ibn Thabit.

hardship of this fighting. One of the righteous predecessors said, "Whoever loves this worldly life should get himself accustomed to bearing calamities". A lover of this worldly life suffers (at least) one of three tribulations: chronic grief, continuous suffering, and endless regret and sorrow. This is because whenever he gets some of its pleasure he seeks something that gives him more pleasure. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said,

> *"Were it that a son of Adam had two valleys of gold, he would have sought a third one."*

The allegorical story of Dr Faustus in German and English literature illustrates that seeking materialistic pleasures ends up in agony. The story is based on a medieval legend of a man who has mastered almost all branches of knowledge and seeks to master what is beyond the physical world through black magic. To achieve that he sells his soul to the devil who promises twenty-four years of earthly pleasure. The time of agony arrives after the lapse of the period agreed upon, and Faustus realizes - too late - his own folly, for nothing can save him from Hell-fire. Indeed, happiness that comes from carnal and worldly pleasure is short-lived.

Prophet `Isa the son of Maryam (peace be upon him) said that the likeness of a lover of this worldly life is as the likeness of a drinker of intoxicants: the more he drinks from them, the more he feels thirsty.

Almighty Allah, the All-Knower, says in the Glorious Qur'an about the nature of human beings, ﴿*Not (as you think that you - mankind - will not be resurrected and recompensed for your deeds), but (you men) love worldly life.*﴾ (Al-Qiyamah: 20)

Is happiness found in having sons?

It is a fact that children are allurements of the life of this world, but there are many who cause their parents to suffer and treat them with disobedience and ingratitude, instead of the kindness, obedience, and gratitude they deserve. Moreover, many parents were killed at the hands of their own sons because the latter craved after their wealth or because they prevented them from satisfying some of their vain desires.

There are many examples of children's disobedience and impiety in their treatment of their parents and the distress of the latter because of this. That is why many parents throughout the ages expressed their anger with their children because of their ingratitude.

When his bounty is met with filial ingratitude, Shakespeare in King Lear likens ingratitude to a cruel monster and exclaims:

Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted friend,

More hideous when thou show'st thee in a child

Than the sea-monster!

(King Lear, I, IV)

Filial ingratitude is very painful; to have

"a thankless child is sharper than a serpent's tooth."

(King Lear, I, IV)

Is happiness found in experimental science?

Can material, experimental science, which has made great achievements for man, bring him happiness?

It is a fact, as Dr. Muhammad Husayn Haykal said[1], that science has revealed to man many things in life and enabled him to enjoy its luxury to an extent that has never come to the mind of any human being before.

It is also a fact that thirst for knowledge is a characteristic of the human soul, for whenever man

1. In his book *Al-Iman Wal-Ma`rifah Wal-Falsafah.*

understands the secrets of something he is pushed to examine these secrets or to search again for something new. Nevertheless, knowledge in itself, is not a means of happiness. Rather, it often leads to worry and confusion. Happiness is a beautiful dream flying before us with wings of light. It is fresh air that we inhale but we never feel satisfied, no matter how much of it we inhale. Happiness is a goal that the sons of Adam have been trying to reach since the time of their father until today. They chase after it but whenever one of them is about to reach it, distress and hardship drag him back. This happiness is not found in science, since science is a lust and lusts do not bring about true happiness. Many scientists and scholars spent their lifetimes pursuing science and knowledge but when they arrived at the end of their life's journey, they regretted their prolonged endeavor because their knowledge had caused them more grief. Consequently they recommended that their sons should be raised in an atmosphere of faith, and be left to live according to their inborn nature, and not try to reveal the secrets of the unseen through science.

Our knowledge is quite limited, no matter how profound it may seem, if compared to the extent of endless existence. Nietzsche as well as other great scholars, who

spent their youth pursuing knowledge, stated that science is undoubtedly a violator of the secrets of the unseen. They confessed that when they realized that the screens of the unseen were countless and endless, they felt weak and imagined that they were just chasing after a mirage, even though the end of this mirage is the whole of reality.

In spite of his materialistic view, the British philosopher Bertrand Russell confirmed that man has achieved victory through science in his struggle against nature, but in his struggle against his own self, he has failed to gain any victory and science has not availed him in any way. He also confessed that religion is still the dominator of this field.

Dr. Henry Link, the well known American psychiatrist said, opposing those who deny belief in the unseen in the name of science and respect for ideology, and indicating that science alone cannot achieve for man the means to true happiness: "Actually, there are now in every field of science, phenomena that encourage this wrong trend of the glorification of reasoning. Nevertheless, it is psychologists who have discovered that absolute dependence on reasoning is apt to destroy man's happiness, and perhaps undermine the foundations of his success. Moreover, this discovery has been the

result of direct experiments made by those scholars with people and scientific tests that they applied to thousands of them. It is also important to confirm that they reached these discoveries by means of education and religion, character, and the philosophy of life in general.

We will never be guided to decisive solutions to the thorny problems of life or achieve happiness only through the development of information and scientific knowledge. This is because the promotion of science means an increase in confusion and chaos. Unless all these sciences are gathered together under the standard of the obvious daily facts of life and subjected accordingly, they will never lead to the liberation of the minds that created and discovered them. On the contrary, they will definitely lead to the collapse of these minds. Still, this unification should be fulfilled through a way other than that of science; that is, the way of faith."[1]

Is happiness found within man?

Therefore, happiness is not in having abundant wealth, in enjoying power and prestige, in having a large number of children, in gaining benefits and profit, nor in material science. Happiness is an abstract thing that

1. Quoted in *Al-`Awdah Ila Al-Iman.*

cannot be seen by the eye, measured by quantity, stored in cases, or bought by money. It is something that man feels in the form of purity of the soul, tranquility of the heart, and peace of mind. It is something that springs from within man and is not imported from outside.

It was said that once a man became angry with his wife and menaced her saying, "I will cause you much misery!" "You cannot make me unhappy, just as you cannot make me happy," said the wife quietly. He asked angrily, "How can I not do so?" "If happiness was in my expenses, you would stop giving them to me, and if it was in jewels and precious dresses, you would deprive me of them, but it is in something that no one possesses," she replied trustfully. The husband said with astonishment, "What is it?" His wife answered in full certitude, "I find my happiness in my faith, and my faith is in my heart, and my heart is controlled by my Lord, alone!"

This is true happiness, which no human being can give to anyone or take by force from whomever Allah has granted it. It is happiness that one of the righteous believers felt and thus said, "We enjoy such happiness that if kings knew about it they would fight us with the sword to get it!" Another believer felt this spiritual

pleasure filling his heart, so he said, "Sometimes I have such great feelings that I say, 'If the residents of Paradise are enjoying what I am enjoying, then they must be enjoying a good life'."

Those who are granted this blessing pay no attention to calamities, no matter how terribly harmful they may be, and smile even if life turns hard and unfavorable. Unlike others, they philosophize pain, considering it a blessing for which they must show gratitude to Allah, as if they had spiritual glands that produce a special substance with which catastrophes turn into blessings!

To what extent material things contribute to achieving happiness

No one can deny that the material side (of life) has a role in the achievement of happiness. But how? The Messenger of Islam (peace be upon him) said,

> *"Part of the happiness of a son of Adam is: a good wife, a good house, and a good means of transport."*[1]

However, this is not everything, as it is measured by quality not quantity. It is sufficient for a man to be free from material things that embitter his life, such as a bad

1. Narrated by Ahmad on the authority of Sa`d ibn Abi Waqqas.

wife, a bad house, and a bad means of transport, to be given safety and well being, and to get sustenance without hardship or suffering. How truthful this Prophetic *hadith* is:

> *"Whoever comes upon the morning safe, with his body healthy, and having the food (that he needs) on this day, seems to have possessed the whole world."*[1]

If happiness were to be a tree whose stem is the human soul and the human heart, then belief in Allah and the Hereafter would be its water, nutrition, air, and light.

Iman gives man springs of happiness that never dry up, nor can happiness ever be achieved without them. These are the springs of tranquility, security, hope, contentment, and love. Each of them will be dealt with in detail in the following pages.

1. Narrated by al-Bukhari, at-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Majah.

Chapter Three

Iman and Love

- The value and importance of love for achieving happiness
- Love for Allah
- Love for nature
- Love for life
- Love for death
- Love for people
- The believer does not envy or harbor hatred against anyone
- Altruism is one of the characteristics of the believer
- Hatred in Islam
- Tolerance is a part of the creed

Iman and Love

"By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, you will not enter Paradise unless you (truly) believe, and you will not (truly) believe unless you love one another."

(A Prophetic *hadith* narrated by Muslim)

The value and importance of love for achieving happiness

Love has a more special and effective meaning than contentment. Man may be content with something or someone but his contentment does not cause him to love that thing or person, for this pertains to love, and not to contentment.

Love is the spirit of existence, the elixir of the hearts, and a source of safety for mankind.

Just as the law of gravity grasps the earth and prevents planets from colliding with one another lest they

should fall down or burn and fade away, the law of love protects human relations from clashing with one another lest they should burn and waste away.

This is the essence of love that people have always appreciated its value both in the past and the present times. It was said, "If love prevails, people will never be in need of justice or laws".

Once, a great ascetic poet said,[1] "Love changes bitterness into sweetness, sand into gold, turbidity into clarity, pain into a remedy, prison into a garden, illness into a blessing, and oppression into mercy. It softens iron, melts stone, resurrects the deceased, and breathes life into it."

"Love is a wing with which the physically heavy man flies so high that he can reach the most unreachable places..."

"It will not matter if Allah increases the wealth and widens the kingdom of the slaves of worldly pleasures and adornments, for we do not need any of them. We are completely attached to the kingdom of love that never perishes or fades away...!"

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1. This is the great ascetic Jalal ad-Din ar-Rumi, and these words are taken from his emotional ascetic poetry quoted by As-Sayyid Abu al-Hasan an-Nadawi in his book *Rijal Al-Fikr Wad-Da`wah Fil-Islam*.

"O Love! May Allah bless you! You are the curer of my illnesses and pains and the remedy of my fear and pride. You are my experienced physician that removes all my troubles!"

In recent times, a journalist, who is also a man of letters and who is interested in spiritual matters, wrote,[1] "I saw from afar lights glittering amidst the sea like a guiding star and wished that I could have a star like it in the future. Is there anyone who does not wish to have a guiding star in his future? It is a guiding star for the remaining days of our life... but what is the nature of this star?

Is it wisdom? But does it give us anything other than rigid logic?

Is it caution? But does it provide us with anything other than continual fear?

Is it work? But does it offer anything other than exhaustion and blazing animosity?

Is it property? But does it afford anything other than fear, caution, tiredness, and complexity?

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1. This is Muhammad Zaki `Abd al-Qadir, and these words are taken from one of his daily writings in Al-Akhbar Newspaper, Cairo.

Is it love? Love is the only essence that grants us safety, stability, and peace. We love everything, every man, and we love catastrophe just as we love blessing. We love the former, to awaken the ability of resistance that makes the soul ready to deal with it... and we love the latter because it is like a gentle wind that alleviates the heat of the fight. We love the whole of existence, its beginning and its end, and life and death therein!

Can anyone have this kind of love? If the answer is yes, he will be an angel."

●●●

We may answer this question by saying that only one kind of person can have this kind of love; it is the believer. *Iman* alone is the spring of pure eternal love and the believer alone is the one who can love everything, even catastrophes. He loves the whole of existence, its beginning and its end, and life and death therein.[1]

1. Missionaries and Orientalists spread the idea that only Christianity is the religion of love and affection that has no room for hatred or violence, and that Islam is the religion of fighting that has no room for tolerance or love. This is compound ignorance or open misguidance, for we read in the Gospel that Christ said, "I have not come to throw peace on earth, but a sword. I have come to separate the son from his father, daughter from her mother, and daughter-in-law from her mother-in-law. The enemies of man are men themselves." (Matthew: 34-36). The history of Christianity,=

Love for Allah

Whoever believes in the creed of Islam has penetrated the mystery of existence. Thus a Muslim loves

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= namely in the Middle Ages, shows that it was the religion that excelled all the other religions in waging wars, shedding blood, and causing terrible human massacres, not only between it and its opponents but also between its sects.

Prophet `Isa (peace be upon him) is free from these savage massacres, because their liability goes to the Church that distorted Allah's words, inserted idolatry into the religion of Prophet `Isa, and gave itself the right of legalization and prohibition, setting of legislations that Allah did not permit, and selling of indulgences and the land of Paradise for *dirhams* and *dinars*. The church's superstitions, interests, and the vain desires of its men, who sustained injustice, exploitation, and corruption, are all responsible for these wars and atrocities.

Still and all, Islam is the greatest call for love and the best confirmation of its meanings. It is also the strongest fighter against hatred, animosity, and envy, and the strongest hindrance before their means and gates.

Once in Tripoli (in Lebanon), one of the fair Christian nobles said to Rashid Rida, may Allah have mercy on him, "Islam contains virtues which are as high as mountains or even higher, but you have buried them to the extent that they are hardly known. We, however, have something that does not enjoy such consideration, like the phrase "Love for Allah and relatives," but we kept extending it repeating that "virtues are Christian" until it has filled the whole world!"

This is a testimony of a moderate Christian that requires no comment.

Allah, the provider of life and the sole source of creation, security, origination, and provision. He loves Him as man loves beauty, since he has seen in His universe signs of perfect creativity and creative perfection.

> ﴿*... no want of proportion wilt thou see in the Creation of (Allah) Most Gracious.*﴾
>
> (Al-Mulk: 3)

> ﴿*... (such is) the artistry of Allah, who disposes of all things in perfect order.*﴾
>
> (An-Naml: 88)

> ﴿*He Who has made everything which He has created most Good...*﴾
>
> (As-Sajdah: 7)

He loves Him as man loves perfection. Still, if we think about it, is there anything other than His Perfection (Glory be to Him)? All the observable signs of relative perfection are only atoms which are derived from Him and in need of Him.

The believer loves Him as man loves beneficence and good-doing, for it is part of the nature of the soul to love whoever does good to it. Surely, there is no greater beneficence than that of One Who created man, fashioned him into a human being in all respects,

appointed him as His vicegerent on earth, and subjected the whole universe to his use.

> ﴾*It is He Who hath created for you all things that are on earth.*﴿
>
> (Al-Baqarah: 29)

> ﴾*Do ye not see that Allah has subjected to your (use) all things in the heavens and on earth, and has made His bounties flow to you in exceeding measure, (both) seen and unseen?*﴿
>
> (Luqman: 20)

For all these reasons and many others, the believer loves Allah to such an extent that exceeds man's love for his parents, his sons, and even for his own self. He loves everything that comes from Him and everything that He loves. He loves the Book that Allah revealed to take people out of the darkness of ignorance to the light of guidance; he loves the Prophet whom He sent as a mercy for all the worlds; he loves all the people of righteousness and piety whom He loves and who love Him; he invokes Him using the same words that were used by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him):

> *"O Allah! Please grant me Your love and the love of those who love You and make Your love dearer to me than cool water!"*

Love for nature

The believer, under the shade of Islam, loves nature and the whole of existence just as he loves Allah. Nature is an effect of the Grace of his Lord,

> ﴾*Who hath created and further, given order and proportion; Who hath ordained laws and granted guidance.*﴿
>
> (Al-A`la: 2-3)

Everything in nature is in proportion and measure and for a wise purpose.

> ﴾*Verily, all things have We created (are) in proportion and measure.*﴿
>
> (Al-Qamar: 49)

> ﴾*The sun and the moon follow courses (exactly) computed.*﴿
>
> (Ar-Rahman: 5)

> ﴾*And there is not a thing but its (sources and) treasures (inexhaustible) are with Us; but We only send down thereof in due and ascertainable measures.*﴿
>
> (Al-Hijr: 21)

Nature is not an enemy of man but a creation that has been subjected to his use in order to help him accomplish

his mission as Allah's vicegerent on earth. All things in the universe are proofs and signs of truth that glorify Allah and declare His glory in a language that the limited human mind cannot comprehend.

> ﴾*The seven heavens and the earth, and all beings therein, declare His glory: there is not a thing but celebrates His praise; and yet ye understand not how they declare His glory!*﴿
>
> (Al-Isra': 44)

The world, therefore, is not an evil that should be eliminated as soon as possible, as illustrated by the Manichaean philosophy[1] and other related philosophies. Rather, it is a book of Allah that is open for both readers and non-readers where the verses of His Might, Mercy, Greatness, and Grace are recited.

This world, including what is above it and what is below it, is all made by Allah, Who gave to each created thing its form and nature, and further, gave it guidance, and Who granted this universe, including the earth and the heavens, animals, and plants, a unity that makes its

1. Manicheism: A dualistic religious philosophy developed by the Persian Manes and his followers in which goodness, typified as light, God, or the soul, is represented as in conflict with evil, typified by darkness, Satan, or the body. (Editor)

parts like the parts of the body in cooperation, symmetry, and harmony.

> ﴿*Is not permitted to the Sun to catch up the Moon, nor can the Night outstrip the Day: each (just) swims along in (its own) orbit (according to Law).*﴾
>
> (Yasin: 40)

The universe does not contain anything that was created aimlessly or for jest. Everything in it was prepared to fulfill its role according to the will of Allah regarding the population of the earth, continuation of life until the end of its term, and service to this honored part of the creation; man.

Some people would look at darkness with fear and hatred regarding it as the god of evil that fights against the god of light and goodness. We wonder: how do such people feel whenever darkness wraps them with its black garment, especially when night represents half of time?

The Islamic creed has removed this psychological phantasm and ordained that time should be distributed between night and day, darkness and light, as one of the signs of Allah in His disposition of His Kingdom and one of His blessings that He has bestowed on His creatures, which they should be grateful for and not afraid of.

﴾*Say: See ye? If Allah were to make the Night perpetual over you to the Day of Judgment, what god is there other than Allah, who can give you enlightenment? Will ye not then hearken? Say: See ye? If Allah were to make the Day perpetual over you to the Day of Judgment, what god is there other than Allah, who can give you a Night in which ye can rest? Will ye not then see? It is out of His Mercy that He has made for you Night and Day, that ye may rest therein, and that ye may seek of His Grace and in order that ye may be grateful.*﴿

(Al-Qasas: 71-73)

True love of nature is represented by the believers who see in this nature Allah's Face and the verses of His Qur'an that refer to His Divinity.

﴾*Behold! In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of Night and Day,-there are indeed Signs for men of understanding; men who celebrate the praises of Allah, standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and contemplate the (wonders of) creation in the heavens and the earth, (with the thought): 'Our Lord! Not for naught hast Thou created (all) this! Glory be to Thee!'*﴿

(Al `Imran: 190-191)

This love is best exemplified in the Messenger of Islam (peace be upon him) who declared his love even for the mountains. He even expressed his love for a mountain that any one other than him could have seen an evil omen in it, because of the defeat that afflicted him on it; that was the mountain of Uhud.

Al-Bukhari narrated that Anas ibn Malik, the Prophet's servant, said, "Once the Prophet (peace be upon him) left for Khaybar and I accompanied him to be in his service. On his way back, (the mountain of) Uhud came into his view and he said, 'This is a mountain that loves us and that we love.'"

Love for life

As the Muslim loves nature, he also loves life and does not consider it an evil that his parents inflicted upon him, a burden that should be cast away, or a prison that he should escape from. On the contrary, he considers it a mission that should be fulfilled and a blessing that he should thank Allah for.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said,

> *"The best of people is whoever is granted a long lifetime and does good (therein)."*[1]

1. Narrated by Ahmad and at-Tirmidhi.

"No one of you should wish for death or call for it before it comes (in its predestined time). A man's (good) deeds come to an end when he dies, and a believer's lifetime adds nothing but goodness to him."[1]

"No one of you should wish for death, (for) he is either a good doer, so he may (then) increase (his good deeds), or an evil doer, and so he may (then) repent to Allah."[2]

Thus, life is better in any case, so if he loses determination he may say,

"O Allah! Make me live as long as You know that life is good for me and make me die whenever death is good for me!"[3]

Love for death

The believer does not love life because he is keen on gaining its worldly pleasures to the extent that he fears death, but he loves life because through it he fulfills Allah's rights on earth. In this way, he loves death because it takes him quickly to his Lord. The Prophet

1. Narrated by Muslim.
2. Narrated by Ahmad and al-Bukhari.
3. Narrated by an-Nasa'i and al-Hakim.

(peace be upon him) declared, "Allah loves to meet whoever loves to meet Him."[1]

When the Prophet (peace be upon him) was given the choice between meeting his Lord and staying in this worldly life, he said, "I choose the highest companions!"

When `Ali ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) was stabbed by `Abd ar-Rahman ibn Muljam, he said, "I have won, by the Lord of the Ka`bah!" When Bilal was dying, his wife cried loudly, "How grieved I am!" Bilal said to her, "You should rather say, 'How joyful I am!' Tomorrow I shall meet my beloved ones: Muhammad and his Companions!" When the polytheists in Makkah took Khubayb ibn Zayd to crucify him, he said, "I do not mind in what way I should be killed, as long as I am killed as a Muslim." And whenever Allah's Sword, Khalid ibn al-Walid, sent a message to any of the Persian or Roman leaders, he used to conclude his message - after calling them to peace and to Islam - with the words: "... otherwise I will crash you with men who love death as much as you love life!"

1. Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Love for people

The believer loves all people because they are servants of Allah and his brothers in humanity, as they are all sons of Adam, and there is a kinship relation and a common goal connecting them as well as a common enemy, i.e. Satan.

The general kinship relation that connects all people is that which Allah refers to in the verse that reads,

> ﴾*O mankind! Revere your Guardian-Lord, Who created you from a single Person, created, of like nature, his mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women;-reverence Allah, through Whom ye demand your mutual (rights), and (reverence) the wombs (that bore you).*﴿
>
> (An-Nisa': 1)

The word "wombs" is most preponderantly meant for the human kinship relation that joins all mankind; this is indicated by the opening of the verse.

As for the common goal and the common enemy, Allah the Almighty says about them,

> ﴾*O men! Certainly the promise of Allah is true. Let not then this present life deceive you, nor let the*

Chief Deceiver deceive you about Allah. Verily Satan is an enemy to you: so treat him as an enemy. ﴿

(Fatir: 5-6)

Hence, the eternal afterlife and its everlasting enjoyment is the goal shared by all people, while Satan, who hinders them from achieving it, is their common enemy.

The creed of the Muslim does not allow racial tendencies or gender animosities. The Muslim believes that all people are the sons of Adam who was created out of dust, and that the variations in people's languages and colors are only a proof of Allah's Might and His Greatness as a Maker and one of His signs in creation.

﴾*And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and your colors: verily in that are Signs for those who know.* ﴿

(Ar-Rum: 22)

Consequently, the Muslim's feeling towards his brothers from among mankind is not a secondary matter in his sight or a subsidiary matter in his religion. But, it is a belief that he adopts for the sake of Allah and a means

with which he seeks to get near to Him. Imam Ahmad and Abu Dawud narrated that Zayd ibn Arqam said, "The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) used to say after each prayer,

> *"Allah! Our Lord and the Lord and Owner of all things! I bear witness that You alone are the Lord (and that) there is no partner with You! O Allah! Our Lord and the Lord of all things! I bear witness that Muhammad is Your servant and Messenger! O Allah! Our Lord and the Lord of all things! I bear witness that all servants are brothers (in the religion of Islam)!"*

In fact, there are numerous prophetic *hadith*s that urge Muslims to be united, to help one another, and to maintain the sense of fraternity among themselves. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "None of you will have (true) faith till he wishes for his (Muslim) brother what he likes for himself." Therefore, a true Muslim should wish all goodness and happiness in this world and the Hereafter for his brother in Islam.

Abu Musa narrated another *hadith* in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) reiterates that Muslim brother should strengthen one another, "A believer to another believer is like a building whose different parts

support each other." The Prophet then clasped his hands with the fingers interlaced to assert this meaning.

Anas narrated another *hadith* where Allah's Messenger said, "Help your brother, whether he is an oppressor or an oppressed one." People asked, "O Allah's Messenger! It is all right to help him if he is oppressed, but how should we help him if he is an oppressor?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "By preventing him from oppressing others."

Have you now realized how supreme human brotherhood is in the conscience of the Muslim? It is the degree that follows the degree of belief in the Oneness of Allah and in the Message of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

How can it ever be that a Muslim despises a human race, while the Qur'an instructs him to respect the races of all creatures and consider their entities?

> ﴿*There is not an animal (that lives) on the earth, nor a being that flies on its wings, but (forms part of) communities like you. Nothing have We omitted from the Book, and they (all) shall be gathered to their Lord in the end.*﴾
>
> (Al-An`am: 38)

In this regard, we may recall the Prophet's *hadith*:

> *"Were it not that dogs are a community among the (other) communities, I would have commanded that they should be killed."*

This is how one who believes in Islam feels towards people. It is not a feeling of racial superiority, regional fanaticism, class animosity, or personal envy, but a feeling of love and fraternity for all people.

Not only should a Muslim love and support his fellow human beings, but he should also help animals. A person is rewarded or punished for his treatment of animals. We have the following prophetic *hadiths* to assert this view. Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "While a man was walking he felt thirsty and went down a well and drank water. As he was coming out, he saw a dog panting and eating mud because of its terrible thirst. The man said, "This (dog) is suffering from the same thing as I did." So, he went down the well and filled his shoe with water, caught hold of it with his teeth and climbed up to let the dog drink. Allah thanked him for his (good) deed and forgave him." People asked, "O Allah's Messenger, is there a reward for us in serving animals?" He replied "Yes, there is a reward for serving any animal."

`Abdullah ibn `Umar narrated another *hadith* that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, "A woman was tortured and was put in Hell because of a cat that she had kept locked till it died of hunger. She neither fed it, nor gave it water to drink when it was locked up, nor did she set it free to eat the insects of the earth."

The believer does not envy or harbor hatred against anyone

The minimal fruit of affection that *Iman* inculcates in the heart of the believer, is that it protects him from hatred and envy. This is because the lights of *Iman* are sufficient to disperse the darkness of envy from his heart and thus he always has a pure heart and invokes Allah using the invocation of the righteous ones:

> ﴾*Our Lord! Forgive us, and our brethren who came before us into the Faith, and leave not, in our hearts, rancor (or sense of injury) against those who have believed. Our Lord! Thou art indeed Full of Kindness, Most Merciful.*﴿
>
> (Al-Hashr: 10)

The believer does not envy because envy is, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, one of the diseases of

nations. It is a psychological disease that does to the soul what illnesses do to the body. It causes continual grief, sorrow, and fury. Not only this, it is also a physical disease that absorbs energy, harms the body, and draws misery on the face.

The believer does not envy because he wishes goodness for all the servants of Allah and does not oppose his Lord in His disposition of the affairs of His creatures or distribution of His provisions for them.

> ﴾*Verily thy Lord doth provide sustenance in abundance for whom He pleaseth, and He provideth in a just measure. For He doth know and regard all His servants.*﴿
>
> (Al-Isra': 30)

He believes that his Lord is Most Just in His distribution of provisions, talents, and gifts and that His judgements as regards His creatures, are the result of His perfect Wisdom of which he may only recognize a little. It was said, "The envious person is ungrateful because he is not satisfied with Allah's judgement."

> ﴾*Or do they envy mankind for what Allah hath given them of his Bounty?*﴿
>
> (An-Nisa': 54)

Hence, the believer does not rejoice at any calamity that may be inflicted upon the others, nor does he grieve for any blessing that Allah may bestow on any of His servants; he rather says what the Prophet (peace be upon him) has taught him,

> *"O Allah! Whatever blessing that I or any of Your creatures has entered upon the morning with, is from You alone; there is no partner with You, so (all) praise and gratitude is due to You!"*

The believer does not envy because his attention is attached to something that is more valuable and lasting than the worldly adornments for which people compete with one another and envy one another. He directs his intention towards the noble things and everlasting meanings: to the Hereafter and Paradise.

Al-Bukhari narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said,

> *"There is no envy except in two: a man whom Allah has given wealth and he spends it in the right way and a man whom Allah has given wisdom and he judges (between people) according to it and teaches it (to them)."*

Allah the Almighty says,

﴾*... and for this (piety) let those aspire, who have aspirations.*﴿

(Al-Mutaffifin: 26)

﴾*Be ye foremost (in seeking) forgiveness from your Lord, and a Garden (of Bliss).*﴿

(Al-Hadid: 21)

Al-Hasan al-Basri said, "O son of Adam! Why should you envy your brother? If what he possesses has been given to him because Allah wanted to honor him, then why should you envy one whom Allah has honored? And if it is not so, why should you envy one whose destiny is the Fire?" Ibn Sirin said, "I have never envied anyone because of any worldly matter. If he is one of the residents of Paradise, how should I envy him for anything pertaining to this worldly life, which is valueless if compared to Paradise, and if he is one of the residents of the Fire, how should I envy him for any worldly matter while his destiny is the Fire?"

The believer does not envy because he is forgiving, tolerant, and generous. He restrains his anger although he can declare it, forgives although he is able to avenge, and tolerates although he is entitled to a right. He does not preoccupy himself with disputes and enmities, for one's

lifetime is too short to be spent in undergoing them, nor does this worldly life deserve this kind of suffering. How should he then let enmity and animosity poison his heart? How can he pass the night while harboring hatred against his brother and thus passing the night away from Allah's Mercy? The Prophet (peace be upon him) is reported to have said,

> *"(People's) deeds are presented every Monday and every Thursday. Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He, forgives on this day anyone who does not associate in worship anything whatever with Allah, with the exception of a person between whom and his brother there is animosity; He says, 'Leave these two until they are reconciled.'"*[1]

The believer does not envy or hate because envy and hatred are instigated by Satan while love and purity of the heart are bestowed by Allah, the Most Merciful.

> ﴿*Satan's plan is (but) to excite enmity and hatred between you.*﴾
>
> (Al-Ma'idah: 91)

> ﴿*It may be that Allah will grant love (and friendship) between you and those whom ye (now) hold as enemies.*﴾
>
> (Al-Mumtahanah: 7)

1. Narrated by Muslim.

﴿*On those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, will (Allah) Most Gracious bestow Love.*﴾

(Maryam: 96)

Moreover, a heart being free from animosity and envy, is one of the first characteristics of the believer; rather it is the minimal among his pious qualities. The Muslim's *Iman* is not perfected unless he loves for his brother what he loves for himself and hates for his brother what he hates for himself.

These supreme meanings are far from the destructive calls which are adopted nowadays and which only aim at inculcating animosity, hatred, and enmity between sects and classes, so that people may live in continuous disputation and quarreling through which the propagators of these calls can achieve rule and authority.

Altruism is one of the characteristics of the believer

The highest degree of love is that man gives preference to his brother over his own self by giving him something that he himself needs. He may remain hungry to satisfy his brother, work hard to make him rest, and stay awake at night to let him sleep.

This degree of love is completely absent among atheists and materialists, for the believers prefer the others to their own selves only for the sake of Allah and seeking His pleasure and reward while the others only think of their own pleasure.

There has never been any form of love that is free from personal desires and interests, like that form of love whose foundation Islam set among the Muslims in Madinah. The Muhajirun left their homes and wealth seeking the Grace and Pleasure of Allah and in order to help in the cause of Allah and His Messenger. Their brothers in Madinah, the Ansar, received them with yearning and longing and treated them hospitably. Each one of them wanted to have at least one of the Muhajirun in his house to the extent that they drew lots. Then the Prophet (peace be upon him) associated them as brothers, one to the other, and this brotherhood was as strong as the bonds of kinship. There were no differences pertinent to nationality, tribe, kinship, class, or profession among them; there was only true brotherhood, love, sincerity, and altruism.

> ﴿*And (moreover) He hath put affection between their hearts: not if thou hadst spent all that is in the earth, couldst thou have produced that affection,*

but Allah hath done it: for He is Exalted in might, Wise.﴿

(Al-Anfal: 63)

`Abd ar-Rahman ibn `Awf, one of the Qurayshi Muhajirun, said, "When we came to Madinah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) joined me and Sa`d ibn ar-Rabi`- one of the Ansar belonging to the tribe of Al-Khazraj - as brothers. Then Sa`d said to me, 'I am one of the most wealthy men among the Ansar so I may give you half my wealth, and I will also divorce any of my two wives whom you like, and when she finishes her waiting period you can marry her.' " `Abd ar-Rahman reacted to this generous altruism with modesty and continence, saying, "May Allah bless your wives and wealth for you, but just guide me to the market."

Allah praises the Ansar's generous attitude in His eternal Book, saying,

﴾*But those who before them, had homes (in Madinah) and had adopted the Faith, show their affection to such as came to them for refuge, and entertain no desire in their hearts for things given to the (latter), but give them preference over themselves, even though poverty was their (own lot).*﴿

(Al-Hashr: 9)

In his book *Ad-Din*, Dr. Muhammad `Abdullah Diraz (may Allah have mercy on him) said,

"The glorious effect that religions have on communities is not only restricted to rectification of conduct, correction of behavior, application of the rules of justice, and resistance to chaos and corruption, as they also have a positive role bearing a deeper impact on the entity of communities. Religions unite the hearts of their adherents with a tie of love and affection. This unique tie is not to be equaled with any other tie such as gender, language, neighborhood, or common interest. Furthermore, these ties together remain superficial irrespective of the extent of their influence. They are subsidiary ties that join individuals yet still have gaps, discontinuities, and psychological hindrances, unless they are completely united by the tie of creed and sharing the same ideals. By then, abundance in number becomes a form and means of unity and the souls become like mirrors facing each other; reflecting each other's images. Moreover, it usually happens that this spiritual unity continues without any of the other forms of unity and creates a very strong and close relationship between individuals, although they may have different races, genders, dialects, nationalities, and interests. It is also

observed that many of the states, which are established on the basis of common interests in one country between different religions, are obliged to resort to certain principles which are shared by all these religions and call their adherents to help one another in goodness and for driving back invaders and intruders. That is why it was said, 'Patriotism which does not depend on incentives derived from good morals and religion is nothing but a fort which is about to collapse.' It has now been proven that religion to the community is like the heart to the body."

Hatred in Islam

There is no doubt that every man has another passion other than love: the passion of hatred, fear, or abhorrence, which is full of animosity, evil, war, and bloodshed. However, how does religion deal with this horrible passion?

Professor Goode, head of the department of philosophy and psychology in one of the colleges of London, said, "Passions which are common and can be stirred easily are the passions of abhorrence and fear that motivate large numbers of the common people instead of mercy, munificence, generosity, and love. Whoever seeks

to rule a certain nation for some purpose does not usually manage to do so unless he creates things that stimulate hatred and fear in the hearts of the members of this nation. If someone wants to unify a nation, he has to create for its members an enemy on another planet so that they may fear it. Thus there is no wonder that, in dealing with their neighbors nowadays, national governments are led by feelings of abhorrence and fear, for their rulers live on these feelings which moreover strengthen national enhancement."

Commenting on this, the great Muslim scholar, Sayyid Abu al-Hasan an-Nadawi, said,[1]

"The solution that Professor Goode presented for the problem of nations' competitions and the dilemma of wars is a fair and reasonably directed solution. Enmity between nations does not disappear unless they have a common enemy from outside that they all hate and fear and cooperate with each other against. This, however, does not need creation or invention, nor does it require that an enemy from another planet should be found. This is because the religion has declared that the enemy of mankind is on the earth itself and that they all should take

1. See *Madha Khasira al-`Alam bin-Hitat al-Muslimin* (What Loss Did the Decadence of the Muslims Cause to the World?).

him as an enemy, be on their guard against him, and help one another in fighting him. The Qur'an states,

> ﴾ *Verily Satan is an enemy to you: so treat him as an enemy. He only invites his adherents, that they may become companions of the Blazing Fire.* ﴿
>
> (Fatir: 6)

It also declares,

> ﴾ *O ye who believe! Enter into Islam whole heartedly; and follow not the footsteps of the evil one; for he is to you an avowed enemy.* ﴿
>
> (Al-Baqarah: 208)

Islam divides the human world into two categories: the friends of Allah and the friends of Satan; advocates of truth and advocates of falsehood. It has legislated war and fighting only against supporters of falsehood and those who fight in the cause of Satan wherever they may be and whoever they are. The Qur'an confirms,

> ﴾ *Those who believe fight in the cause of Allah, and those who reject Faith fight in the cause of Evil: so fight ye against the friends of Satan: feeble indeed is the cunning of Satan.* ﴿
>
> (An-Nisa': 76)

Therefore, the circle of hatred is tightened in the heart of the believer so he no longer hates for a personal benefit, or because of tribalism, nationalism, regionalism, or caste, or out of animosity or envy. His hatred is restricted to one field: hatred for the sake of Allah, i.e., only for the cause of truth. In this regard, the Prophet (peace be upon him) is reported to have said,

> *"Whoever loves for (the sake of) Allah, hates for (the sake of) Allah, gives for (the sake of) Allah, and retains for (the sake of) Allah, has been granted perfect Iman."*

Tolerance is a part of the creed

The circle of hatred is restricted to the people of falsehood, wrongdoing, and transgression, but the believer's hatred for them is mixed with pain and pity for them, wishing them good, and invoking Allah to guide them to the right way. The Prophet (peace be upon him) asked Allah to guide his people "because they do not know". Allah addressed His Prophet (peace be upon him), saying,

> ﴿*It may be thou frettest thy soul with grief, that they do not become believers.*﴾
>
> (Ash-Shu`ara': 3)

In the creed of the Muslim, there are two matters that make him - along with his adherence to his religion and his firm belief - the most tolerant of people with those who differ with him or those who disbelieve in his call:

Firstly, the Muslim definitely believes that the requirements of Divine Will, which is always joined with wisdom, obligate that people are different regarding religion and belief.

> ﴿*If thy Lord has so willed, He could have made mankind one people: but they will not cease to dispute, except those on whom thy Lord hath bestowed His Mercy...*﴾
>
> (Hud: 118-119)

> ﴿*If it had been thy Lord's Will, they would all have believed,-all who are on earth! Wilt thou then compel mankind, against their will, to believe!*﴾
>
> (Yunus: 99)

As Allah's Will is always fulfilled - and His Will is always connected to His Wisdom - how can the believer resist Allah's Will or deny His Wisdom?

Secondly, Allah commanded His Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to avoid indulging in vain disputation with his opponents, but rather to commit their affair to Allah, and to inform them that Allah will judge

between them on the Day of Resurrection. So there is no need for argumentation that stimulates trouble and turmoil and kindles rancor in people's hearts. Allah the Almighty said to His Messenger,

> ﴾*If they do wrangle with thee, say, 'Allah knows best what it is ye are doing. Allah will judge between you on the Day of Judgement concerning the matters in which ye differ.'*﴿
>
> (Al-Hajj: 68-69)

> ﴾*Now then, for that (reason), call (them to the Faith), and stand steadfast as thou art commanded, nor follow thou their vain desires; but say: 'I believe in the Book which Allah has sent down; and I am commanded to judge justly between you. Allah is our Lord and your Lord: for us (is the responsibility for) our deeds, and for you for your deeds. There is no contention between us and you. Allah will bring us together, and to Him is (Our) final return.'*﴿
>
> (Ash-Shura: 15)

> ﴾*Say: 'O Allah. Creator of the heavens and the earth! Knower of all that is hidden and open. It is Thou that wilt judge between Thy Servants in those matters about which they have differed.'*﴿
>
> (Az-Zumar: 46)

This is the believer according to the creed of Islam: he loves the whole of existence, loves Allah and nature, loves life and death, loves destiny whether bitter or sweet, and loves all people. If he is to hate, he hates Satan and his party, yet his hatred is joined with mercy, pity, and wishing goodness for all people.

This love is a proof of his belief in his Lord and His Messenger; his leader to Paradise. How truthful are the words of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

> *"By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, you will not enter Paradise unless you (truly) believe, and you will not (truly) believe unless you love one another."*

Chapter Four

Iman and Hope

- Hope is important for achieving tranquility and happiness
- Despair and disbelief are interrelated
- *Iman* produces hope
- The necessity of hope in life

Iman and Hope

Hope is important for achieving tranquility and happiness

Hope is one of the sources of security and tranquility for the believer. It is a ray that appears to man in the darkness of life and illuminates the way for him. This is hope with which the tree of life grows and man enjoys the taste of happiness and feels the delight of life.

Hope is a motivating power that drives man to work, creates in him incentives to struggle for the fulfillment of his duties, and breathes life into his body and soul. It motivates the lazy person towards activity and the active one to maintain his activity and increase its rate. It drives one who fails once, to try again and again until he succeeds, and also drives the successful one to double his effort to achieve further success. It is the hope in the coming harvest that drives the farmer to work hard; it is

the hope for profit that urges the merchant to travel and take risks; it is the hope for success that encourages the student to study hard and persistently; it is the hope for victory that stimulates the soldier to show extreme courage; it is the hope for liberation that alleviates the expenses of struggle and strife in the sight of an enslaved nation; it is the hope of recovery that makes bitter medicine sweet in the mouth of a patient; and it is the hope for Allah's Pleasure and Paradise that activates the believer to resist his vain desires and obey His Lord.

In short, hope is the elixir of life, motivator of its energy, alleviator of its calamities, and an incentive of delight and joy therein. Before all this, hope is sweet-tasting and beautiful in its own right, whether it is realized or not.

On the other hand, despair is the opposite of hope. It is an elimination of hope and disappearance of the motives of expectations and wishes in the heart. It is the insurmountable obstacle that destroys the motives of activity in the soul and weakens the incentives of strength in the body. Ibn Mas`ud said, "Loss is involved in two things: despair and self-satisfaction." Imam al-Ghazali commented on this, saying, "He connected these two

because happiness is only obtained through persistent pursuit and continuous perseverance, but the person in despair does not seek to achieve anything 'because what he wants is impossible in his sight'. As for the one who is self-satisfied, he thinks that he sought to achieve his goal and has already achieved it, so he does not pursue it any further. One does not search for what is in one's hand just as what is impossible is not usually sought after; happiness already exists and is available in the sight of the self-satisfied person and unreachable according to the despairing one. That is why Ibn Mas`ud connected despair and self-satisfaction."

The events of a life are clearly a witness to this view. If a pupil is in despair of success, he keeps away from his books, becomes bored at school and at home, and no longer benefits from the private lessons that he takes, nor from the advice of others, nor from the preparation of a suitable place for study, nor from anything else unless his hope for success is restored.

In like manner, if a patient is in despair of recovery, he hates the medicine, the doctor, the clinic, and the drugstore, cannot stand life or people, and no medicine is effective for him, unless he restores hope in his recovery.

Hence, when despair overcomes any man, the world turns black in his eyes, all gates are closed before him, all means to recovery seem unavailable, and the earth, despite its vastness, is straitened in his sight. Even though he may be aware of it, he does not know exactly what is better for him.

This is despair: it is a poison that has a slow effect and a volcano that destroys man's activity. The condition of those who surrender to despair always leads them to believe that life produces nothing and bears no meaning.

Despair and disbelief are interrelated

There is no wonder that this kind of person is commonly found among those who deny Allah or who have weak faith in Him. This is because they live only by themselves, disconnecting all relations with the universe and its Lord. Thus there is no wonder that such people are the most afflicted with despair and that the latter are the most disbelieving among the disbelievers, as there is a connection between despair and disbelief; each of them is a cause and a result of the other. Despair produces disbelief and disbelief produces despair.

﴾... *truly no one despairs of Allah's Soothing Mercy, except those who have no faith.*﴿

(Yusuf: 87)

﴾*And who despairs of the mercy of his Lord, but such as go astray?*﴿

(Al-Hijr: 56)

This despair most obviously appears at times of hardship and calamities. The Qur'an disparages this kind of person repetitively, saying,

﴾*If We give man a taste of Mercy from Ourselves, and then withdraw it from him, behold! he is in despair and (falls into) blasphemy.*﴿

(Hud: 9)

Then it makes an exception of this kind:

﴾*Not so those who show patience and constancy, and work righteousness...*﴿

(Hud: 11)

Allah also declares,

﴾*Yet when We bestow our favours on man, he turns away and becomes remote on his side (instead of coming to us), and when evil seizes him he gives himself up to despair!*﴿

(Al-Isra': 83)

﴾... *but if ill touches him, he gives up all hope (and) is lost in despair.*﴿

(Fussilat: 49)

Despair is not only a prerequisite of disbelief but also of doubt. Every one who loses firm certainty in Allah and His meeting, Wisdom, and Justice, has been deprived of hope and an optimistic view towards people, the universe, and life; such a person looks at the world through black glasses, seeing the earth as a forest, people as wild beasts, and living as an unbearable burden.

The Glorious Qur'an is rich in its parables to give Muslims tangible examples to illustrate how a Muslim should never lose hope in the mercy of his Creator. The most illustrious example here is the story of Ayyub (Job) who was severely afflicted by Allah but he remained patient and never lost his trust. Ayyub was a thoroughly good man who almost had everything in life. He was wealthy, had many sons and daughters, had a faithful wife, and good friends. He never ceased thanking Allah for His many blessings, and was bounteous and helpful to people around him. Yet, he was tempted by Satan to lose his trust in God, but he never did. He had one ordeal after another; however, he never lost his faith or trust in the Almighty. His heart told him that Allah could not be

unjust, so he stood all his trials. He first lost his friends, then all his children, and finally he was inflicted with an incurable, hateful disease that alienated him from all the people except his loyal wife. Poverty ensued to the extent that his wife had to sell her lovely hair for sustenance, but there was nothing left and so she had to desert him. Even then he turned to Allah to ask him to restore his health and to relieve his tongue in order to be able to utter his praise to Him. Allah answered his prayer and inspired him to wash his feet in cold running water in the spring that erupted for him and to have a cold drink. When he did, he soon recovered; his health was totally restored, his wife and children returned. It was one of the miracles of Allah.

This was the story of a self-righteous, extremely patient man who was able to withstand all trials and resist all kinds of temptations because his faith in the Almighty never wavered.

Iman produces hope

On the other hand, *Iman* and hope are also interrelated. The believer is the most hopeful, optimistic, and cheerful among people and the farthest one from pessimism, boredom, and weariness. This is because

Iman means: believing in a supreme power that disposes of the affairs of this universe, a supreme power that has knowledge of all things, and is able to do all things; believing in an unrestricted power, an absolute mercy, and a limitless generosity; and believing in an All-Mighty and Ever-Merciful God, Who responds to the distressed one, when he calls Him, Who removes the evil, gives plentifully, forgives sins, accepts repentance from His servants, and Who is more merciful to His servants than a mother to her babe and more beneficent to His creatures than themselves.

He (Glorified and Exalted be He) stretches out His hand during the night so that the one who has committed a sin during the daytime may repent and stretches out His hand during the daytime so that the one who has committed a sin during the night may repent. He rejoices at the repentance of His servant more than the stray one when he is found, the absent one when he returns, and the thirsty one when he finds water. He writes down each good deed of His servant as from ten good deeds to seven hundred times or more, and writes down each evil deed of his as only one evil deed and He may forgive it.

The Almighty (Glory be to Him) calls from a close distance, one who turns away from him and receives the one who is coming to him from a far distance. He says,

"I am as My servant thinks I am, and I am with him whenever he remembers Me: if he remembers Me in himself, I remember him in Myself; if he remembers Me in a group of people, I remember him in a group of people that is better than them; if he draws near to Me a hand's span, I draw near to him an arm's length, and if he draws near to Me an arm's length, I draw near to him a fathom's length; and if he comes to Me walking, I go to him at speed."(1)

He gives days (of varying fortunes) to people by turns, so He may change a state of fear to one of security and peace, and a state of weakness to one of strength, and makes ease with every hardship, a way-out with every affliction, and relief with every difficulty.

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The believer who seeks protection with God - Who is Beneficent, Ever-Merciful, Exalted in Might, Most Generous, Oft-Forgiving, Full of loving kindness, Lord

1. A Divine *hadith* narrated by al-Bukhari and others.

of the Throne of Glory, and Doer of all that He intends - enjoys limitless hope, cheerfulness, and optimism. He approaches life with a high spirit and receives its events with a smiling face, and not sullenly.

If he fights, he is sure of victory because he is with Allah and so Allah is with him and because his endeavor is for His sake alone, therefore, the Almighty helps him.

> ﴾*That they would certainly be assisted, and that Our forces,-they surly must conquer.*﴿
>
> (As-Saffat: 172-173)

If he falls ill, he never loses hope of recovery.

> ﴾*(It is Allah) Who created me, and it is He Who guides me; Who gives me food and drink, and when I am ill, it is He Who cures me.*﴿
>
> (Ash-Shu`ara': 78-80)

If he commits a sin, he never loses hope of Allah's forgiveness, for he believes that however great his sin may be Allah's forgiveness is even greater.

> ﴾*Say: 'O My Servants who have transgressed against their souls! Despair not of the Mercy of Allah: for Allah forgives all sins: for He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.*﴿
>
> (Az-Zumar: 53)

If a Muslim is inflicted with difficulty, he still hopes for Allah's relief.

> ﴾*So, verily, with every difficulty, there is relief: verily, with every difficulty there is relief.*﴿
>
> (Al-Inshirah: 5-6)

One "difficulty" can never overcome two "reliefs". Ibn Mas`ud said, "If difficulty were to enter a hole, relief would surely follow it!"

If he is afflicted with a calamity, he wishes that Allah would reward him for this tribulation and bring him good from it.

> ﴾*Who say, when afflicted with calamity: 'To Allah we belong, and to Him is our return': They are those on whom (descend) blessings from their Lord and Mercy, and they are the ones that receive guidance.*﴿
>
> (Al-Baqarah: 156-157)

If he ever hates someone or takes him as an enemy, he is nearer to restore good relations and peace with him, wishing for reconciliation and agreement, for he believes that Allah is able to change the feelings of people's hearts.

﴾It may be that Allah will grant love (and friendship) between you and those whom ye (now) hold as enemies. For Allah has power (over all things); and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.﴿

(Al-Mumtahanah: 7)

If a believer observes that falsehood has gained power over the truth, he is certain that falsehood will soon perish and that the truth will surely achieve victory over it.

﴾Nay, We hurl the Truth against falsehood, and it knocks out its brain, and behold, falsehood doth perish!﴿

(Al-Anbiya': 18)

﴾For the scum disappears like froth cast out; while that which is for the good of mankind remains on the earth...﴿

(Ar-Ra`d: 17)

If he becomes hoary and his hair turns grey, he keeps wishing for another life in which he will enjoy everlasting youthfulness, life, and happiness, without senility, death, or distress.

﴿*Gardens of Eternity, those which (Allah) Most Gracious has promised to His servants in the Unseen: for His promise must (necessarily) come to pass. They will not there hear any vain discourse, but only salutations of peace: and they will have therein their sustenance, morning and evening.*﴾

(Maryam: 61-62)

•••

On the other hand, Materialists content themselves with regular norms and manifest causes and do not look for anything beyond them. In contrast, believers do not follow the same manner but rather connect themselves with the secret of existence; with Allah, the Creator of causes and effects, Who has hidden causes that His servants do not comprehend. Therefore, why should their hearts not turn towards Him when they are subdued by crises and captured by hardships?

They find in Him refuge when they are distressed, cheerfulness when they are afflicted with melancholy, and support when they are few in number. The patient, who suffers from a disease that doctors cannot cure, invokes Him, hoping for recovery. The distressed one supplicates Him to grant him endurance and contentment,

to bring him good from his suffering, and to compensate him for his loss. The wronged one prays to Him, hoping that He will help him avenge himself against the one who wronged him, for there is no hindrance between the invocation of a wronged person and Allah. The one who is deprived of progeny asks Him to provide him with a righteous offspring. Everyone hopes that Allah will respond to his request, as there is nothing beyond Allah's Ultimate Power.

Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) asked Allah to grant him a son although he was an aged person:

> ﴾*O my Lord! Grant me a righteous (son)!*﴿
>
> (As-Saffat: 100)

Allah answered his supplication and sent him angels in the form of human visitors. They said to him,

> ﴾*Fear not! We give thee glad tidings of a son endowed with wisdom.' He said: 'Do ye give me glad tidings that old age has seized me? Of what, then, is your good news?' They said: 'We give thee glad tidings in truth: be not then in despair!' He said: 'And who despairs of the mercy of his Lord, but such as go astray?'*﴿
>
> (Al-Hijr: 53-56)

Prophet Ibrahim praised his Lord saying,

> ﴿*Praise be to Allah, Who hath granted unto me in old age Isma`il and Ishaq: for truly my Lord is He, the Hearer of Prayer!*﴾
>
> (Ibrahim: 39)

A long time after Prophet Ya`qub (peace be upon him) lost his son Yusuf, and although he was apt to lose hope in his return, and after he had been afflicted with the confinement of Yusuf's full brother in the incident of the great beaker of the King, despair never penetrated his heart! Revealing his great trust in Allah, he said,

> ﴿*So patience is most fitting (for me). Maybe Allah will bring them (back) all to me (in the end). For He is indeed full of knowledge and wisdom.*﴾
>
> (Yusuf: 83)

When he expressed his grief for Yusuf, his sons said to him,

> ﴿*By Allah! (Never) wilt thou cease to remember Yusuf until thou reach the last extremity of illness, or until thou die!' He said: 'I only complain of my distraction and anguish to Allah, and I know from Allah that which ye know not.'*﴾
>
> (Yusuf: 85-86)

Then he revealed how his heart was filled with great hope and trust, that Allah would reunite him with his two lost sons, saying,

> ﴾*O my sons! Go ye and enquire about Yusuf and his brother, and never give up hope of Allah's Soothing Mercy: truly no one despairs of Allah's Soothing Mercy, except those who have no faith.*﴿
>
> (Yusuf: 87)

Likewise, Prophet Zakariyya (peace be upon him), had great trust in Allah,

> ﴾*Behold! he cried to his Lord in secret, praying: 'O my Lord! Infirm indeed are my bones, and the hair of my head doth glisten with grey: but never am I unblest, O my Lord, in my prayer to Thee! Now I fear (what) my relatives (and colleagues) (will do) after me: but my wife is barren: so give me an heir as from Thyself,-(One that) will (truly) represent me, and represent the posterity of Ya`qub; and make him, O my Lord! one with whom Thou art well-pleased!'*﴿
>
> (Maryam: 3-6)

As a reward, the Almighty responded to his prayer,

﴿*O Zakariyya! We give thee good news of a son: his name shall be Yahya: on none by that name have We conferred distinction before.*﴾

(Maryam: 7)

﴿*And (remember) Ayyub, when He cried to his Lord, 'Truly distress has seized me, but Thou art the Most Merciful of those that are merciful.' So We listened to him: We removed the distress that was on him, and We restored his people to him, and doubled their number, as a Grace from Ourselves, and a thing for commemoration, for all who serve Us.*﴾

(Al-Anbiya': 83-84)

The big fish swallowed Prophet Yunus (peace be upon him)

﴿*But he cried through the depths of darkness, 'There is no god but Thou: glory to Thee: I was indeed wrong!' So We listened to him: and delivered him from distress: and thus do We deliver those who have faith.*﴾

(Al-Anbiya': 87-88)

Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) traveled by night with his people to save them from Pharaoh and his forces but the latter knew about their travelling,

"So they pursued them at sunrise. And when the two bodies saw each other, the people of Musa said: 'We are sure to be overtaken.'"

Surely, it would be a tremendous overtaking, as the sea was before them and the enemy was behind. Yet, Musa was not scared nor did he despair. He said,

﴾*By no means! My Lord is with me! Soon will He guide me!*﴿

(Ash-Shu`ara': 60-62)

His hope was not futile:

﴾*Then We told Musa by inspiration: 'Strike the sea with thy rod'. So it divided, and each separate part became like the huge, firm mass of a mountain. And We made the other party approach thither. We delivered Musa and all who were with him; but We drowned the others. Verily in this is a Sign...*﴿

(Ash-Shu`ara': 63-67)

In the way of his emigration with his Companion Abu Bakr, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) resorted to the cave of Thawr. The polytheists followed up the traces of their footsteps and the man who was responsible for that tracing said, "Muhammad did not overstep this place. He either ascended to heaven from here or descended below from this way." Abu Bakr became more

afraid about this man who was responsible for the call to Islam and the last of the Prophets (peace be upon him). Thus he wept, saying, "If anyone of them looks beneath his feet, he will see us!" The Prophet (peace be upon him) reassured him, saying,

> *"What do you think of two people when Allah makes the third among them?"*

The Qur'an describes this situation in the verse that reads,

> ﴿*If ye help not (your Leader), (it is no matter): for Allah did indeed help him, when the Unbelievers drove him out: he had no more than one companion: they two were in the Cave, and he said to his companion, 'Have no fear, for Allah is with us': then Allah sent down His peace upon him, and strengthened him with forces which ye saw not, and humbled to the depths the word of the Unbelievers. But the word of Allah is exalted to the heights: for Allah is Exalted in might, Wise.*﴾
>
> (At-Tawbah: 40)

These are incidents which are witnessed and recorded in history. Materialists may deny some or even all of them because they are extraordinary if compared to the ordinary causes of things that people know. However,

believers are certain that the ordinary causes never restrict Allah's absolute Might and their being unchangeable is not a fact that cannot be changed. If scientists and inventors were to restrict their researches and inventions to things that people are accustomed to in their times, science would have never achieved any progress and we would have never reached the age of the atom and space travel.

The necessity of hope in life

Hope is necessary for the progress of science. If the genius scientists and inventors were to limit their efforts to the definite and endorsed matters of their times and were not pushed by the spirit of hope to reveal unknown matters and acquire more knowledge and facts, science would have never achieved such progress or reached the moon.

Hope is necessary for the success of missions and revivals. By losing hope, a reformer becomes without weapon or rather without a hand to hold that weapon, and so it is not expected that he can achieve any victory or success.

With hope, a hardship is alleviated, and what is far away is drawn near, as time brings near what is far and time is a part of the remedy.

The best of the reformers is Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He spent thirteen years in Makkah calling his people to Islam, but they mocked at his call, made noise in the midst of his recitation of the Qur'an, denied his proofs, were stubborn regarding the signs that he showed, and hurt his Companions. Nevertheless, he never submitted or lost hope.

When harm inflicted by the polytheists upon his Companions increased, he ordered them to migrate to Abyssinia and said to them trustfully and faithfully,

> *"Disperse in the earth and Allah will gather you together!"*

Khabbab ibn al-Aratt, one of the Prophet's Companions, was severely tormented by his lady who kept placing hot iron bars on his back until he was unable to bear it any longer. He went to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said to him painfully, "Will you not invoke Allah for us?" It seems as if he was urging time to go faster so that the situation between belief and disbelief would be terminated by a Prophetic invocation for which the supports of the Throne would be shaken, and Allah would send down His punishment over the evildoers as He had done before with `Ad and Thamud and those who came after them.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) became angry because of his Companion's hastiness and gave him a lesson where he taught him how to have patience with his present suffering and hope for victory in the near future. He (peace be upon him) said,

> *"(The body of) a (believing) man (in the nations) before you would be combed with iron combs that would remove his flesh from the bones and nerves, and he would be cut by a saw into two pieces, but that did not divert him from his religion. By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, Allah will make this matter (i.e. Islam) prevail (to the extent) that a traveler from San`a' to Hadhramaut will fear nothing but Allah, and a wolf as regards his sheep, but you are hasty!"*

During the emigration from Makkah to Madinah, after the Prophet (peace be upon him) had left his own town, chased, oppressed, changing his way, resorting to the cave, walking during the night, and hiding himself during the daytime ... Suraqah ibn Malik caught up with him dreaming of the one hundred camels, which was the promised reward that the Quraysh had offered to anyone who would bring Prophet Muhammad, whether dead or alive. However, the forelegs of Suraqah's horse sunk into

the ground and he fell down. The Prophet (peace be upon him) looked at him and, as Allah had revealed to him the unknown future of his religion, he (peace be upon him) said to him, "O Suraqah! How would you feel if Allah made you wear the two armlets of Khosrau?" The man was astonished so he wondered, "Khosrau ibn Hurmus?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied in the affirmative.

Then he (peace be upon him) went to Madinah and started a hard bloody struggle against the polytheists and advocates of falsehood. According to the norms set by Allah, war had its ups and downs between the two parties until it was the time of the Battle of Al-Ahzab (the Confederates) when all the elements of idolatrous polytheism united against the Muslims and the Jews betrayed them and joined their enemies. The Prophet and his Companions were in an awful situation between the Quraysh and Ghatafan and their allies from outside Madinah, and the Jews and hypocrites from inside. The Qur'an illustrates this situation saying,

> ﴿*Behold! They came on you from above you and from below you, and behold, the eyes became dim and the hearts gaped up to the throats, and ye imagined various (vain) thoughts about Allah! In*

that situation were the Believers tried: they were shaken as by a tremendous shaking.﴾

(Al-Ahzab: 10-11)

Under such terrible circumstances when hope usually fades and one only thinks about salvation, the Prophet (peace be upon him) helped his Companions dig a trench around Madinah to resist and hinder the invaders. He (peace be upon him) kept speaking to his Companions about the prospective future, when Allah would help them conquer the lands of Khosrau in Persia, the lands of Caesar in Syria, and the Yemeni lands in the Arabian Peninsula. He spoke with certainty, so that the hypocrites were enraged and said, "Muhammad is promising that we will get the treasures of Khosrau and Caesar while none of us feels safe when he goes to relieve himself alone!" The Qur'an describes their reaction saying,

﴿*And behold! The Hypocrites and those in whose hearts is a disease (even) say: 'Allah and His Messenger promised us nothing but delusions.'*﴾

(Al-Ahzab: 12)

What do you call this ray of sunlight that appears in the darkness of events and lightens the way before the people? It is hope. You may also call it belief in the help of Allah,

﴾*He helps whom He will, and He is Exalted in Might, Most Merciful. (It is) the promise of Allah. Never does Allah depart from His promise: but most men understand not.*﴿

(Ar-Rum: 5-6)